

PUNCH JANUARY 18 1961

VOL. CXXI

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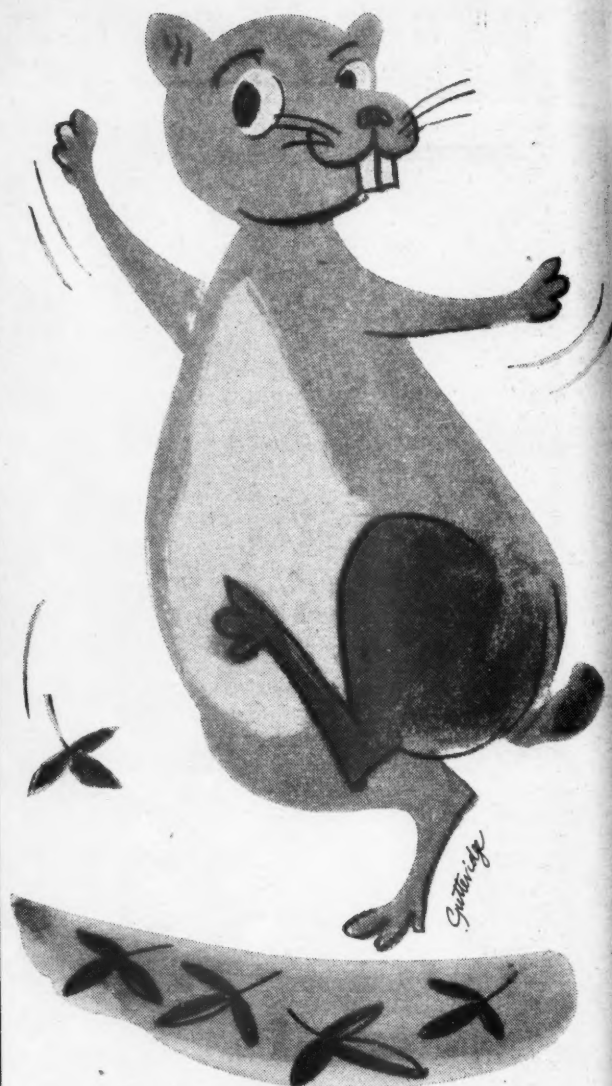
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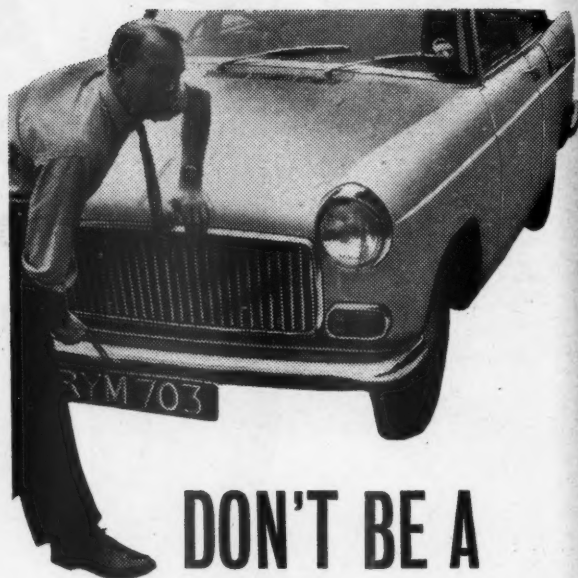


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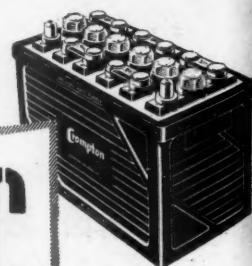
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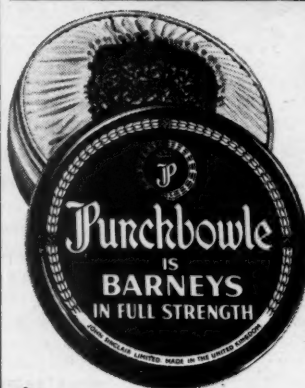
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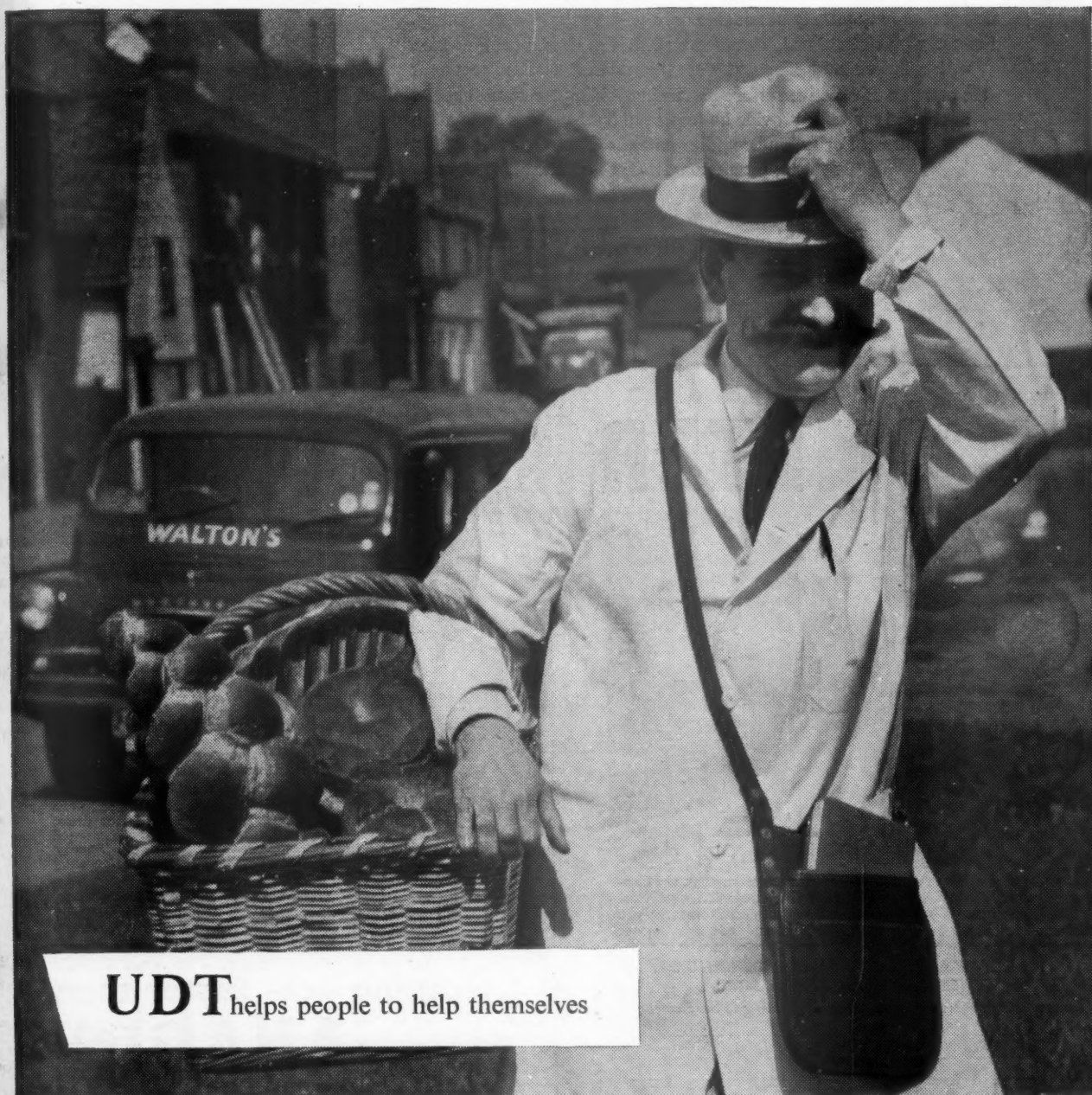


# Mr Walton *(crisp, crusty loaves fresh-baked this morning)* buys another van

Tom Walton needed a new van. Needed it here and now. But he couldn't afford here and now to pay the full price. So what was he to do?

He could do one of two things. First—wait till he *could* afford the full cash price—several hundred pounds. By which time he might have missed the chance to add much extra business, losing substantial profits.

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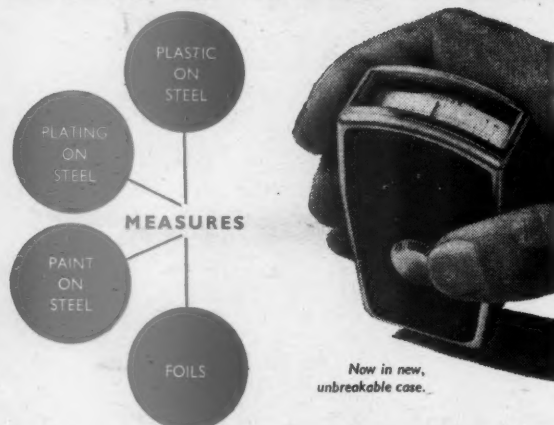
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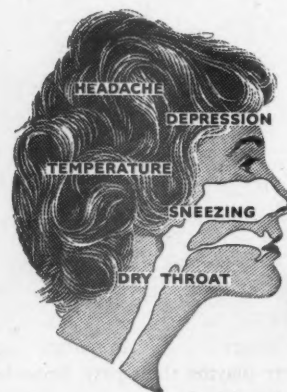
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Depression

Sneezing, dry throat, aching head; cold shivers, hot sweats, aching limbs, depression ... these symptoms usually mean you have caught either a feverish cold or influenza.

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# ANADIN

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## THE SPACEMAN *and the Hostess...*

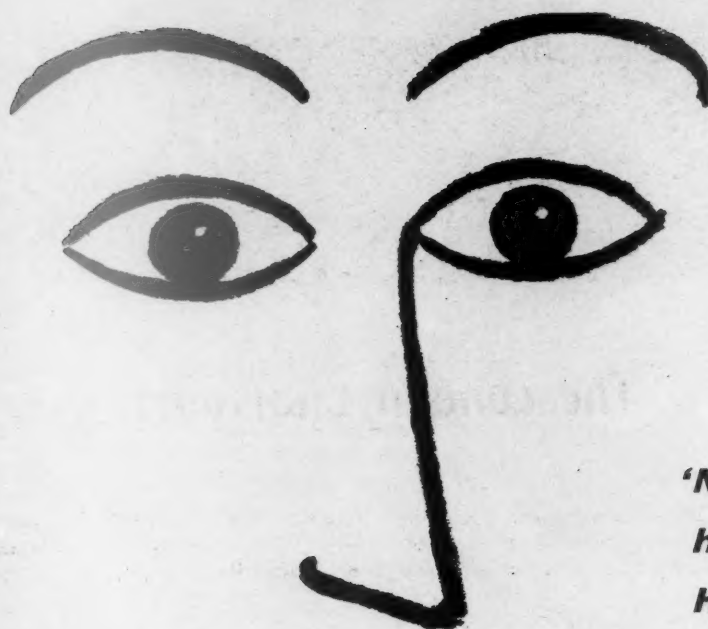
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his feet hit the ground.  
He looks ahead to see  
what kind of ground  
they'll hit next'***

ERNEST HAYCOX

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# PUNCH

Vol. CCXL No. 6279  
January 18 1961

Edited by  
Bernard Hollowood



## Articles

- 126 RICHARD FINDLATER  
*Pop People's Reading*
- 130 BERNARD HOLLOWOOD  
*A Time for Greatness*
- 131 PATRICK SKENE CATLING  
*The Agony of Art Buchwald*
- 133 J. B. BOOTHROYD  
*Unconsumed Portions*
- 134 LESLIE MARSH  
*The Understudy*
- 138 H. F. ELLIS  
*Mediatrics: The Knowledgeable Man*
- 140 RICHARD MALLETT  
*Greek to Me*
- 142 GWYN THOMAS  
*A Zone of Hush*
- 145 R. G. G. PRICE  
*Letter Home*
- 147 R. SQUIRE  
*Buying Business*

## Verse

- 129 PENELOPE HUNT  
*No Circulars, No Succour*
- 131 PHILIP NICHOLSON  
*Teacher's First Day*
- 144 LESLIE MARSH  
*The Deserted Village*

## Features

- 136 SOMEONE AT THE DOOR  
*A. F. Wiles*
- 148 IN THE CITY  
*Lombard Lane*
- 148 IN THE COUNTRY  
*Gregory Blaxland*
- 149 SPEECH DAY  
*Graham*
- 156 FOR WOMEN
- 158 TOBY COMPETITIONS

## Criticism

- 150 THEATRE (Eric Keown)
- 151 FILMS (Richard Mallett)
- 152 RADIO (Peter Dickinson)
- 153 BOOKING OFFICE  
*Joanna Richardson: Vu, Vu, des mes Propres Yeux Vu*

## Subscriptions

If you wish to have *Punch* sent to your home each week, send £2 16s. 0d.\* to the Publisher, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

\*For overseas rates see page 158.

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## The London Charivari

AFTER all those French warships happening to turn up on referendum day at Oran (a "routine exercise"), and eleven U.S. destroyers and a reinforced regiment of Marines "exercising in the Caribbean" as the aircraft carrier *Franklin D. Roosevelt* puts in at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba ("normal deployment"), it's more obvious than ever that the old "send a gunboat" days are over.

### Kings of The Jungle

I AM sorry that the Rank Organisation have chosen to ally themselves with 20th-Century Fox, and not

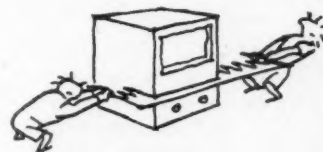


Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. It would have been pleasant to see that glistening gong-striker bashing that lion for a change.

### Full Employment for Leisure

THE children who asked for more homework because they were bored with television may be projecting a long shadow of the future Age of Leisure. When that golden day dawns there won't be enough TV wit or wisdom in the world to satisfy all spare-time cravings. So what will be the great new pastime twenty, thirty, forty years on? I think the bored schoolboys may have given a pointer. It will be work, not the humdrum paid job but self-

imposed physical, mental or artistic toil; do-it-yourself on a cosmic scale, from tree-felling to writing poetry,



from nuclear study to playing the 'cello. Then of course the pros may find it hard to get even enough work to earn a living.

### Better Than One

A GROUP of scientists, busy on the rather typical project of discovering whether worms can be taught anything, have managed to produce a two-headed worm and declare that it is better off than a one-headed worm. It reacts quicker to stimuli, which probably means that when the worm is given an electric shock or prodded with a glass rod its two heads give it a double chance of ducking quickly. This is a good example of the scientific idea of progress; progress is an increase in the organism's ability to cope with its environment—in this case glass rods, electric shocks and scientists. By the same token, if our two-headed great-grandchildren are better able to cope with the remnants of a radio-active world than their fewer headed cousins, progress might be said to have been made; as with the worms the environment will have been created by the scientist.



"You old silly-billy—Mr. Selwyn Lloyd's tough Budget isn't due until April."

### The Eternal Square

WHEN Miss Lisa Gastoni appeared in *Juke Box Jury* last week in a dress so low-cut that you couldn't see it at all in most of the pictures, the B.B.C. is said to have had "many protests" from viewers. This seems to me absolutely incomprehensible. *Juke Box Jury* is aimed straight at teenage hipsters, and the kind of viewer likely to object to that sort of shot of Miss Gastoni has no more right to be watching it than children have to be watching *Whiplash*. Next thing we know, we shall have viewers complaining that the programme doesn't include enough olde tyme waltzes.

### Hand 'em Over

A COMPLAINT is made that policemen and park-keepers no longer snatch cigarettes from juvenile smokers. Many of us were probably unaware that they had this power, but 23-4 G5 c. 12. s.7(3) says "it shall be the duty of a constable and of a park-keeper, being in uniform, to seize any tobacco or cigarette papers in the possession of any person apparently under the age of 16 years, whom he finds smoking in any street or public place." Neither policeman nor park-keeper may smoke the forfeited goods (could this be why the law is seldom enforced?); the tobacco is to be disposed of as a responsible authority may direct. The

Act clearly envisages the possibility of youngsters "rolling their own," but does not mention pipes. Why, I wonder, were park-keepers given these powers and not, say, railway guards or bus conductors?

### What's That Striking?

PRESIDENT DE GAULLE, according to one paper, heard the result of the big vote and then "went to bed at 11 p.m. (10 p.m. G.M.T.)." This enlivened the news item so much that it seemed a pity not to add the G.M.T. bedtimes of, say, John F. Kennedy (6.15 p.m.), Mao Tse-tung (8 o'clock next morning) and Queen Salote of Tonga (I can't work this one out). It all goes to show how the other half lives.

### Winter Greens

THE grass is to be dyed to make the Lincoln Memorial ground look greener for Mr. Kennedy's inauguration, rather as the gardeners painted the roses in *Alice*; but surely the Americans are not going to stop there. If it is to be spring on the lawns why not spring all round? Batteries of sunlamps, the well-timed release of spring migrants, the last-minute planting of unseasonable blooms and some kind of gigantic wind machine that will force warm zephyrs



"Nothing, General. No messages, no phone calls, nothing."

through blizzards are the least we can expect from American technology. And I hope Mr. Kennedy wears seersucker and a panama.

### Taking No Chances

ON the eve of his relinquishment of office President Eisenhower went to Fort Gordon, Augusta, Ga., to bid farewell to the U.S. Army. "This," he said, "is the last review I shall ever receive in my life." So it looks as if he's quite firm about not writing his memoirs.

### Sorry You've been Troubled

THE most shocking story of the week for me was the revelation that Burton-on-Trent Technical College is running six-week courses to make people less shy of using the telephone. The students are office workers, and their employers pay ten-and-six each enrolment fee. Personally I would gladly pay five times this amount to get most of my friends on a course to make them *more* shy of using the telephone.

### Fillip

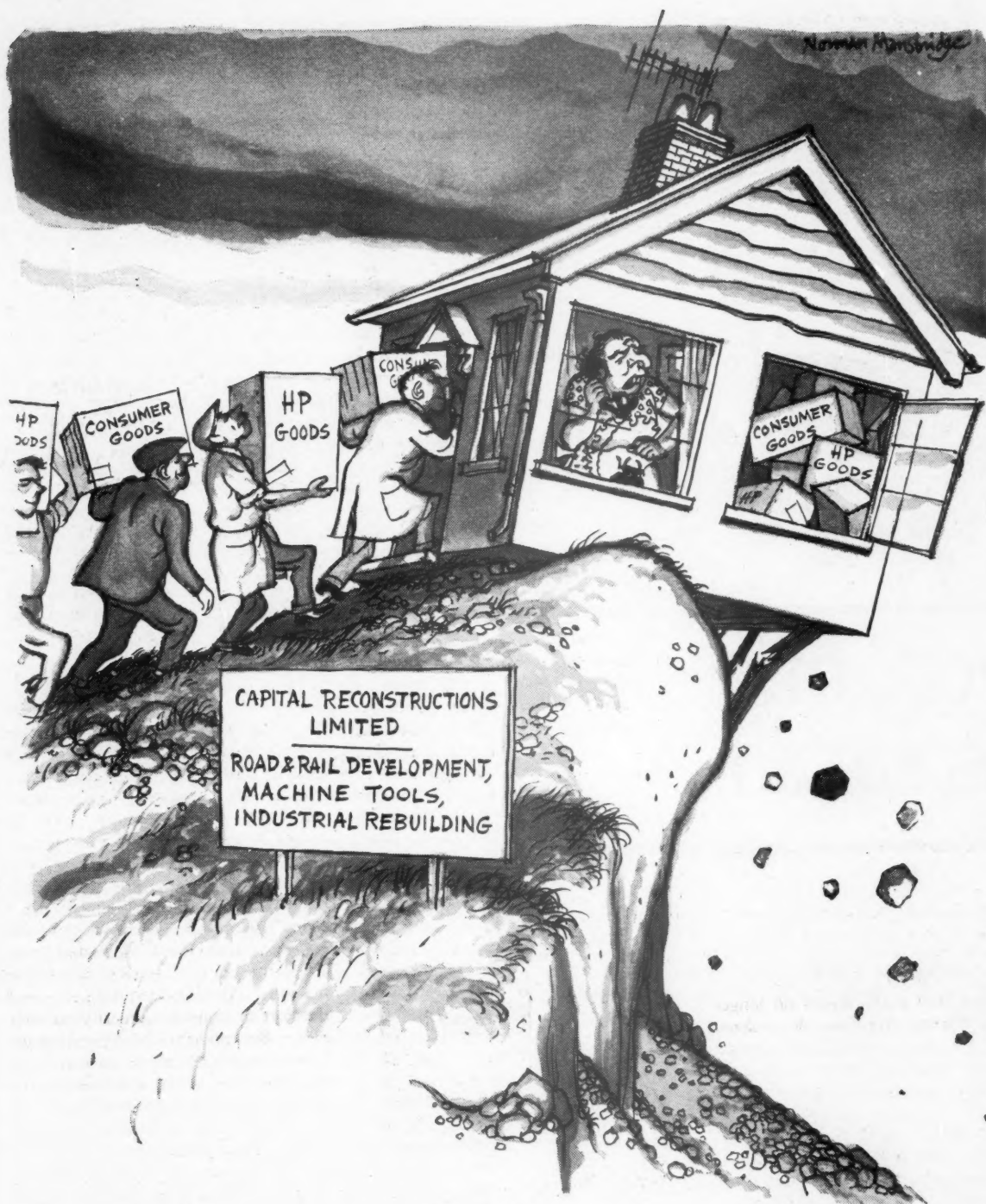
ALREADY the first preparations are being made for the Boat Race and it is not too early to point out that this fixture is suffering from a slight but steady loss of spectator appeal. It is not the only sporting fixture to do that; but, whereas people are always inventing schemes for brighter soccer or the eight-ball over or pawnless chess, rowing gets taken for granted. My suggestion is that in alternate years the direction of the race should be reversed, if only to keep the police and the Port of London Authority on their toes. But perhaps the biggest single boost would be to recognize that there are more than two universities in the country.

### Screwed-up Look

DISTURBING news, this, about the state of industrial workers' eyesight; according to one report "Forty per cent can't see properly," which means that nearly half of them have to have the strike notices read to them by a friend.

— MR. PUNCH





**"Urgent! Give me Capital Reconstructions Limited! Urgent!"**



## POP PEOPLE'S READING

Immediately below the Top People come the Pop People, the men and women in the street who are at the receiving end of mass production. This article, the fifth of a series investigating what these consumers consume, deals with reading

By RICHARD FINDLATER

EVER since Tolstoy denounced "that most powerful engine of ignorance, the diffusion of printed matter," professional pessimists have been weeping over the futility of teaching commoners to read; and their tears splash more noisily than ever before on our supposedly affluent society, where one citizen in five is semi-literate. Why waste danegeld on over-privileged peasants, demands one gang of pseudo-realists, when all they want to read—in the words of Beatie Bryant—is squit; while another sect predicts the imminent extinction of the printed word, as Viewers supplant Readers. Ranked on the other side are those embattled optimists who *know* that the "working class" needs must love the highest whenever it can afford to see it, and that this love is audited by the sales of the paperback publishers. But where, in all this flummery, are the *facts*? There are splendid pickings here for the amateur sociologist who presents a Random Sample from one city street as the image of the nation's will. Yet to discover what the working class actually read, if at all, apart from newspapers, is a quest hurdled with frustrations, leading to one blank face after another. Book publishers, showing a wholesome distrust of statistics, don't know—and many, I suspect, don't want to know. Public librarians, who tend to worship statistics, avoid any concerned with social labels. "Our readers wouldn't like it if we started asking them what class they belonged to. The council wouldn't be pleased, either," says one librarian. "And, anyway, a lot of them wouldn't tell the truth. They're all middle class these days you know." But in spite of the dearth of hard information, certain trends may be unearthed.

A few clues are provided, for instance, by what were known in their golden age as the twopenny libraries. These commercial lending libraries (often housed in a back-street news-agent's shop) thrived in the years of unemployment and depression. They recruited in the 1930s a big new public—much of it from the working class—which could not afford to pay the subscriptions charged by such firms as Boots and W. H. Smith. Ten years ago in their survey of *English Life and Leisure* Rowntree and Lavers reported that these libraries (renting books at a standard minimum of fourpence) were more popular than ever before; but during the last decade of soaring prosperity and TV aerials their readership has, I believe, steeply declined. The main reason why they cannot meet the challenge of television is the rise in the cost of books. Before the war these libraries depended for their expansion on cheap editions of 7s. 6d. novels, but nowadays an economic rental for many of the top pops would be more than their working-class loyalists (mostly women) will pay. Although some stock "specials" and charge a shilling or more for their hire most rent their books from a central wholesaler by the hundred, made up in the following significant ratio: 45 romance, 25 crime, 15 Western, and 5 each of historical, humorous and war books. This pattern has not suffered any radical change in recent years, a publisher assures me, although "the crime may be a bit tougher and the romance a bit more sophisticated." The new working class public which might be drawn to these commercial libraries is, I suspect, deterred by the conservatism of their stock. At the public library they can borrow books which are much more up to date (if sometimes no more sublime) and the fact that they can get these for nothing is, I believe, of less importance than the availability of a wide range of better-sellers. During



*"But Nell, the Queen is becoming suspicious!"*

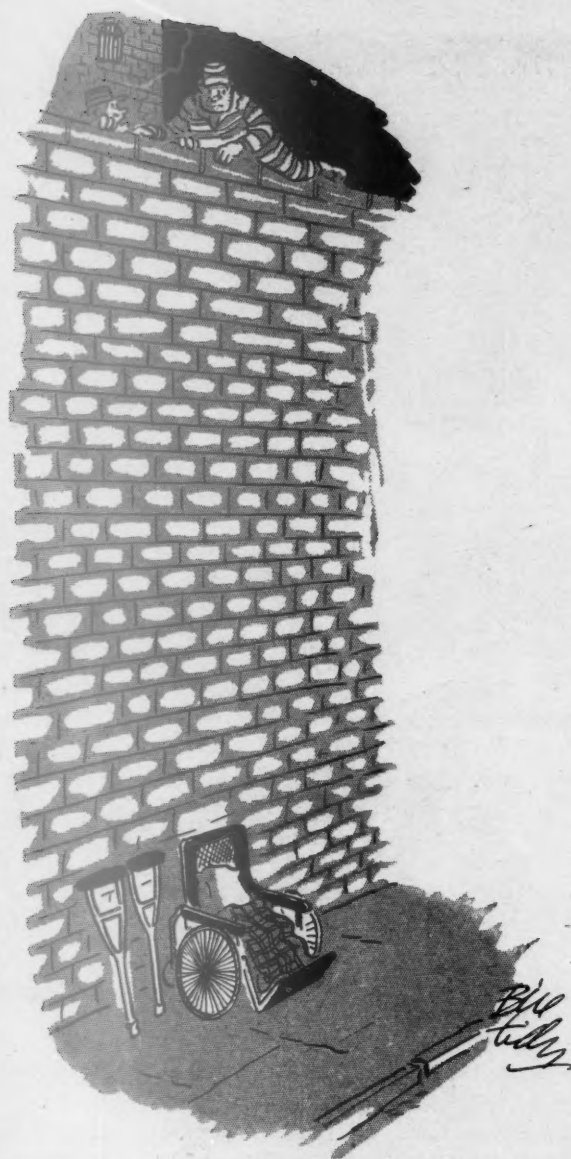
the past five years people in many working-class areas, I hear, are ready to pay library fines on a single "big book" such as *Room at the Top* or *Turn of the Tide* above the usual fourpenny or sixpenny levy in the small commercial libraries.

According to a survey made seven years ago in Derby, a book a week from a public library is borrowed by one person in six from the working class compared with one in four from the middle class. Although these figures can scarcely be taken as a national guide, it is apparently true that middle class readers once repelled by the "social stigma" of public libraries are now using them quite openly. Sceptics claim, indeed, that they are responsible for the steady rise in the readership of non-fiction often claimed as a pointer to the growing literacy of the opportunity State. About three-quarters of the books issued from British libraries are fiction (which makes up around 20 per cent of the 20,000 odd titles published annually). In the dominantly working class borough of Stepney, for example, where one out of every nine people is a registered library-reader, over 400,000 novels were borrowed in 1959/60 compared with just under 18,000

"literature": an illustration, perhaps, of G. K. Chesterton's dictum that "literature is a luxury, but fiction is a necessity." Yet Stepney readers are showing a growing disinclination for novels: in four years the proportion of non-fiction borrowed from public libraries has jumped from 24 per cent to 33 per cent. The same pattern is shown in Acton, which is said to have the highest concentration of industry south of Coventry. "They read books on electronics like fiction here," says the head librarian, who tells me that although the overall turnover in books has dropped slightly during the past year "there are more people reading at any given time, if you take a spot check." These working class readers are, in fact, borrowing more non-fiction—technology, biography and travel—and taking much longer to read it.

Reading habits, however, vary from city to city. A librarian in the Midlands pointed out to me that in his own area people are buying houses in weekly instalments that may be as high as 20 per cent of their income. "Money may be a bit tight and so the library is an obvious place for them to use." But in the London working class suburb where he





"Is everything there?"

worked a few years ago many of his potential readers, living in subsidized L.C.C. housing, spent only a small percentage of their income on rent. With several members of the family out at work, they enjoyed—he said with curious ruefulness—"amenities which they'd never have dreamed of five or six years ago. They didn't have any time for books." In a similar suburb another librarian told me: "We used to estimate that we had a high density of readership within half a mile of the building. Now it's a quarter of a mile at best. They just won't walk any farther to borrow a book."

Does this prove that the working class only takes to reading books when it's hard-up? Of course not. It's impossible to generalize about this, as it is to list a firm order of preference:

in some areas war and crime top the non-fiction list, in others technical manuals occupy pride of place, and in many more travel books and biographies are the favourites. But it does seem safe to risk the generalization that ordinary working class readers not only borrow but buy more books than ever before, and the books they buy are nearly always paperbacks. Last year about 40 million paperbacks were sold at home, and this year the total is expected to top the 50 million mark. Nobody knows how many of those 50 million will be bought by working class readers or what these readers prefer. But a key publisher in this field, far more candid and lucid about Consumers than most of his fellow-Producers (who are too gentlemanly to talk about such mysteries), tells me that there has been a noticeable change in buying during the past two or three years. "Our strength used to be in the industrial areas of the North and Midlands. Then I had in mind as our average reader a mythical mill-hand in Wigan, and I used to turn down books I thought he wouldn't like. But now that our sales have spread much more widely in the south I've liquidated that mill-hand and I'm not sure who's taken his place." This change coincides more or less with a turn away from war-books ("once we could be sure of selling between 100,000 and 200,000 copies of *any* war book we published"). They have, it seems, been ousted from the top of the pops by—in one bookseller's definition—"big novels like *Peyton Place* or *Lady Chatterley's Lover* or *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*." Sex isn't yet indispensable to success but publicity—usually film publicity—is. Certainly the paperback habit is still growing. "If we have a copy of the same book in both hard covers and paperbacks," a librarian tells me, "people very often prefer the paperback because that's the form they're used to." The enormous increase in library buying of paperbacks, indeed, has recently led to justifiable complaints from publishers and authors.

I have stressed the paucity of verifiable fact about book-reading among the Lower Income Brackets, but when it comes to magazine-addiction there is a positive charnel-house of statistics. Ten years ago, when Rowntree and Lavers made their survey, the most popular periodicals were—so they reported—*Picture Post* (with a readership of 9,560,000), *Illustrated* (6,390,000), and *John Bull and Lilliput* (around the 4,500,000 mark). Those two top favourites have now disappeared; the next two have been transformed (not, I think, for the better); and the invaluable I.P.A. National Readership Survey 1959/60 shows us that by far the most popular weeklies in all classes are the institutional *Radio Times* and *TV Times*. The second of these is almost the only periodical which has put on much circulation in the past year. Next in popularity among the £12 to £20 a week group is *Reveille*, read by about one in four; *Weekend* is favoured by 15 per cent; and this is closely followed by *Today* and *Tit Bits*.

Why are they so popular? Because, I suppose, they are crammed with easily digestible scraps of information, leavened by cartoons and a few pin-ups. Working class readers still want to *know*; fact takes precedence over fiction in these weeklies, which seem essentially very close to the pioneering *Answers* of seventy years ago. (The middle-page spread of *Reveille* is, in fact, devoted to "Answers"—from readers who are paid two guineas if their question is published.) A similar pattern of taste is shown in the popularity of the monthlies, where—according to the I.P.A. Survey—*Reader's Digest* heads

the working-class field with 18 per cent of readership. Close behind it, with roughly the same proportion of readership in all classes, follow *Do It Yourself*, *Practical Householder* and *Practical Motorist*; and a bit lower in the scale come the home magazines such as *Ideal Home* and *Woman and Home*. All supply a demand for practical, factual reading.

It is among the women's weeklies, whose sale has ballooned out immensely in the past decade, that changes in the patterns of working class taste may be, perhaps, most clearly detected by the sleuth of social trends. The latest I.P.A. National Readership Survey shows that the four most successful women's weeklies enjoy roughly the same degree of popularity in all classes, not only among women, but among their men-folk, too. Top of the list for the £12 to £20 a week group (and for all other groups) are *Woman* (with 28 per cent of the market) and *Woman's Own* (with 25 per cent); both are classless in their appeal, presenting a predictable mixture of fact, fiction and gossip with slick professionalism. When Richard Hoggart published *The Uses of Literacy* four years ago he singled out a number of women's weeklies as "genuinely working class" publications and extolled their "extraordinary fidelity" to the detail of everyday life. But since then *Red Letter*, for instance, has lost over half its readership (according to figures quoted by Mr. Hoggart and those in the latest I.P.A. Survey): it is read by 3 per cent of the £12 to £20 group, compared with the 6 per cent public for *Vogue*! Three more of Mr. Hoggart's pick have been swallowed up by two new magazines—*Marty* and *Mirabelle*—which cater entirely for the teenage girl and bear little resemblance to the reading matter once favoured by working class mums. True, you can detect in them, if you look very hard, some traces of that appetite for fact outlined in *The Uses of Literacy*: in the use of "real" photographs to tell picture-strip stories, the popularity of "true romances" ("should a boy put football before his girl?" is a sample theme), and the pages of personalia about the current boy idols of the hit parade, to whom such magazines are obsessively devoted. Yet so far as I can tell from bewildered scrutiny they never waver for a moment in their determination to ignore every detail of working class life.

The pantheon in which Adam Faith and Cliff Richard now reign supreme is probably jerry-built, and the magazines now consecrated to their worshippers are likely to take new forms in the next decade, especially if the boom in the record industry collapses. Yet they do illustrate that growing trend towards a "culturally classless" society which Mr. Hoggart regretfully suspected in his book, a trend strongly influenced by the enormous increase in the buying power of the Teenage Consumer since his book was written. Odd, isn't it, if just as dramatists and novelists are doing their belated best to express the facts of working-class life, the Reading Worker is determined to forget them? But is he? Really? "Of making many books, there is no end." And it's worse when you start trying to guess who reads them.

Next week: Pop People's Clothes

## No Circulars, No Succour

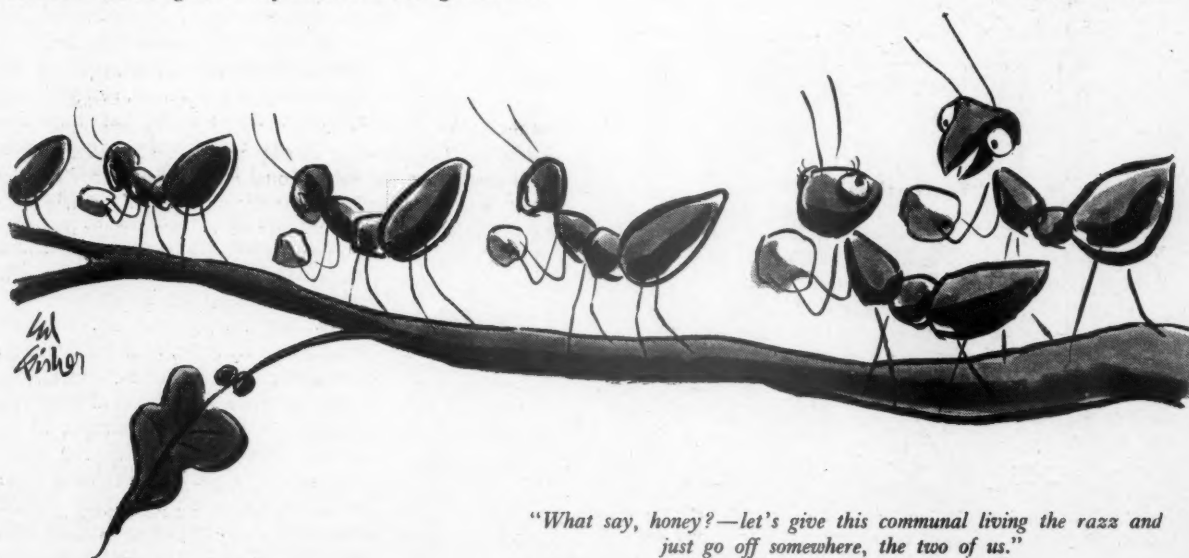
MY face is inexplicably benign,  
And all too often taken as a sign  
Of readiness to tender information  
To stranded characters of every nation.

Oh, for a mug less vicarage, less kind,  
The mirror of a harsh and captious mind,  
The look of someone certain not to care  
Whether a 46 will get you there.

How much of ennui might be spared, of *honte*,  
If Frenchmen, seeking the *Jardin des Plantes*  
Did not assume, on glancing at my phiz,  
A willingness to tell them where it is.

Something is gained; a face whose cheques get home  
In any bank from Alcatraz to Suez  
Is much. But not enough: even in Rome  
Frantic Italians ask me where the loo is.

— PENELOPE HUNT



"What say, honey?—let's give this communal living the razz and just go off somewhere, the two of us."

# A Time for Greatness

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

*"We must try to persuade the people that they must look to themselves rather than to the Government to solve these problems."*  
—Mr. Selwyn Lloyd at Liverpool last week.

WELL, of course, I agree. Our economic situation would be so much easier right now if ordinary folk like us would get to grips with economic realities and stop depending on the Government for every blessed thing. I mean, take "the will to forgo some current consumption in the interests of investment." It ought to be obvious to the meanest intelligence that we need roads and machine tools and power stations far more than we need commercial television. We had the chance, didn't we, every one of us, of refusing to bring the ITA into existence. It isn't the Government's fault, surely, if we let it indulge in extravagant gestures, ram the ITA down our throats, and overnight convert half our mechanics into electricians, radio technicians, H.P. agents and TV repair outfits. It's *our* responsibility, not the Government's.

Then take "the will to export," another of Mr. Lloyd's six economic needs for 1961. Is it the Government's fault if some industries find it easier to

sell at home rather than venture into the tricky field of overseas competition? I mean, it's our job as individuals to steer goods to the ports and ships. All we need is self-discipline. No, we say to the big bold advertisement begging us to buy home-perm sets—no, the export drive must come first. We have only to resist the blandishments of industry and the Government's ITA and those home-perm sets will all be packed up and shipped off to the dollar markets. A public duty. Self-discipline, that's all that's needed. And we don't need the Government's help for that, do we now?

Next consider "the realization that there is a limit to what can be provided from the public purse." Things like family allowances, education grants, free milk, pensions and so on come to mind. If we took our citizenship seriously it would be the work of a moment for every one of us to realize that such matters are not really within the province of the Government. We could so easily refuse to have anything to do with the Health Service, enlist the services of private general practitioners and get all our drugs at the full commercial rate from the chemist. Not only *could*—we *should*. That is, if we

really believe that there is a limit to what can be provided from the public purse. We mustn't expect the Government to decide these things for us: it's *our* job.

What about our "determination to modernize industrial practices?" Isn't that our job too? Why not? We ought to make it our business to ensure that industrial practices are modernized. Most of us live within a few miles of half a dozen factories, and it oughtn't to be too much to ask of a citizen to expect him to pop into these places now and then and find out for himself what's going on. Even the straightforward question to the lodge-keeper, "Are your practices being modernized?" would be better than nothing. And the more determined of us would do more than that, ask to see the manager or the directors or the shop-stewards or someone and demand (yes, *demand*) to be shown over the place and have the practices explained. This kind of thing would really stir them up, and I bet it wouldn't be long before industry was in first-class, tip-top fettle.

The next of the Chancellor's aims for us—and so staggeringly brilliant are they that the appointment of Professor Alexander Cairncross as Economic Adviser to the Government may already be considered an unnecessary sop to tradition—is "a clear view of where we want to go as a nation." Automatically the plea for "self-discipline and self-restraint," to use the P.M.'s spot-on terms, become minimal requirements in the ordinary citizen. For if this decision is left to the Government the danger is that the legislature will become involved in planning of some kind, and planning without a doubt is the last thing that any of us wants. No, this "clear view . . ." must be the tax-payer's responsibility. Ultimately it is his task to steer the Ship of State through the treacherous waters ahead, and no amount of Government intervention on the bridge can excuse dereliction of duty in the ordinary man and woman. We must be up there, all of us, with our hands on the wheel, in all weathers, and utterly single-minded in our sense of duty and direction. If the Government, in its charity, happens to provide the wheel itself (and it is not bound to do so) can we *reasonably* expect it to do more? A clear view of where we want to go as a nation is not a matter for centralized



"Could I borrow a cupful of sugar and the encyclopædia?"



direction except in lands under the heel of authoritarian, fascist, communist, socialist or planning régimes. It is for us to decide. Planning, remember, stifles initiative, puts an unfair burden on our elected Parliamentary representatives, and smacks of economic determinism.

Finally we come to Mr. Lloyd's sixth point—"the will to work, on which the Government has always had a part to play in considering whether the burden of taxation is rightly distributed." And here we see for the first time that the central authority is in a bit of a dilemma. Conscious at all times that self-restraint and self-discipline are better than all your wretched directives from on high, it is nonetheless prepared to help us out by considering whether the burden of taxation is rightly distributed. This really is a weight off our minds. Left to ourselves most of us would obviously dip too deeply into our private pockets in an excess of restraint and discipline, and if that happened the revenue might well be choked by the fruits of our masochistic orgies. No; better in this one instance that the Government should step in and consider whether the burden is being distributed rightly.

The way ahead is clear. We need a tough Budget in April. Let us all take stock of the situation and determine privately to make 1961 a year of recovery and financial probity. It will need a lot of self-restraint and self-discipline, but with H.M. Government hovering there in the background, ever ready to step in with a word of advice and encouragement, we can surely make it. It's up to us.

## Teacher's First Day

REMNANTS of tarnished tinsel  
mock

The violated walls;  
From picture-frame and crawling clock  
The crumbling holly falls:  
The hyacinths that bloomed last term  
Wilt in each dried-out bowl;  
Racked by some January germ  
I call the morning roll—  
An exercise which dissipates  
Vestigial goodwill:  
Disease has spared the reprobates;  
The good alone are ill!

— PHILIP NICHOLSON



ROY DAVIS

## The Agony of Art Buchwald

By PATRICK SKENE CATLING

THE decision of Al Capp, the fifty-one-year-old American comic-strip artist and broadcaster, to make London his occasional home from home will probably prove to be one of the most notable turning-points in the history of Anglo-American relations since the War of 1812. Pillage was what we went in for over there, so now we really can't complain.

Capp's assaults are mainly pictorial and verbal. When he recently stopped people in St. James's Street and told them that arrangements were being concluded to make Britain the fifty-first state in the Union and that one of the Federal Government's immediate plans was to raze Boodle's to make room for a glass-and-chromium skyscraper-garage, he did so only for the innocent fun of filming bowler hats coming to the boil. And when he made another television film at the Savoy Hotel one day last week he demonstrated a broad-minded willingness to slam away at targets on both sides of the Atlantic. After an extravagantly derisive monologue on "the brain-shattering task" of getting one's shoes polished in "a luxury American hotel" he commented: "Well, that'll stop tourism in America. I'm turning out to be an American Lord Haw Haw."

In Stephen Becker's enthusiastic, massive survey of "Comic Art in America" (Simon and Schuster, New

York), which is obtainable from the library of the United States Embassy, Capp is described as one of "a select group of mental gymnasts . . . an intellectual Gargantua . . . skeptical, exuberant, satirical . . . Hogarthian . . . likened to Swift and Dante . . . Falstaffian . . ." *Time* magazine, according to Capp beatification by cover story in 1950, said that he "fills a niche in comics comparable to Gershwin's in jazz, or D. W. Griffiths' in the movies." Or, one might add, comparable to Harold Larwood's in cricket, or Charles Forte's in the catering trade.

Capp created that accidentally heroic, blindingly honest, heart-rendingly ingenuous, blessed, red-blooded, heavy-booted, simple-minded hill-billy, *Li'l Abner Yokum*, and a prodigious, ever-increasing assortment of subsidiary characters, who rejoice in names such as *J. Roaringham Fatback*, *Moonbeam McSwine*, *Senator Jack S. Phogbound*, *Appassionata Van Climax*, and *Slobberlips McJab*, whose fans have been said to include Queen Elizabeth.

Capp's place in the cultural archives of the twentieth century would be secure enough if he had invented only the *Shmoo*, a prolific and providential, boneless, bulbous, lovable and loving little creature, "which, when broiled, came out steak and, when fried, tasted like chicken. It also laid neatly packaged and bottled eggs and milk, all carefully

labelled 'Grade A'." Furthermore, it jumped up and clicked its tiny heels with joy and fell dead when looked at hungrily, and yet, such were its powers of self-multiplication, where each one was consumed another dozen took its place. The *Shmoo* symbolized such bountiful abundance, such leisure and contentment, that it naturally terrified some puritanical economists and social scientists; but millions of other people naturally adored it, and its eventual passing was mourned in the strip, except by Big Business, whose bloated, limousine-borne cigar-smokers are Capp's most melodramatic villains.

Capp Enterprises, itself, of course, is very big business indeed. While 1,200 newspapers publish *Li'l Abner*, in many languages all over the world, the company licenses the manufacture of more than a hundred products, including dolls, orangeade and skunk hats. But these enterprises, multifarious though they are, keep him at his drawing board only three and a half days a week, and he finds that television, conversation and cigarettes fail to use up enough of the energy left over. Now he wants to establish himself as an international columnist, and when he isn't trying to out-Lippmann Walter Lippmann, out-Crosby John Crosby, and out-Ruark Robert Ruark, he's going to

come over here to borrow Art Buchwald's typewriter—to be to New York and London what Buchwald is to Paris and New York.

Capp's column is starting three times a week in the paper that originated Buchwald's admirable Paris column, the New York *Herald Tribune*. Capp said his column would be very flexible. With the help of the Harvard University economist, who also advises President-elect Kennedy, Capp had recently lectured on the international balance of trade and, having succeeded in finding Laos on the map, he had lectured on Laos. Sometimes the column might deal with subjects like those; sometimes it wouldn't. The first one was about "incurable cuteness": when detected in the young it justified euthanasia, because unchecked the malady led inevitably to acting in the manner of Helen Hayes and Mary Martin.

After seeing Capp the other day I happened to encounter the proprietor of the *Herald Tribune*, Mr. John Hay Whitney, who is also the outgoing United States ambassador.

"I've just seen your new columnist," I told Mr. Whitney. He has almost as many columnists as post-Impressionist masterpieces and racehorses. "Al Capp," I added. "He's in great shape."

"I haven't seen him," Mr. Whitney replied, smiling, weighting the words evenly. A diplomatic observer who was present at the time analysed the ambassador's statement.

"I understand from that that Mr. Whitney hasn't actually seen Mr. Capp, but it may be inferred, I think, that Mr. Whitney would not be unwilling to attend a meeting if both sides felt that it might serve some useful purpose. I would say that Mr. Capp is right in there."

Buchwald looked a bit pale, pale swarthy, under the talcum, when he confronted Capp in front of the television cameras at the Savoy. Trouper that Buchwald is, though, he submerged whatever emotions he might have been feeling and discussed Americans in Europe for an Associated Rediffusion programme called "This Week." Capp urged the public to see Buchwald's London review, "The Art of Living," because "the actors are lonely," and Buchwald turned a bit paler and thoughtfully inserted an unlighted cigar into his left nostril.

In spite of the obvious strain, however, Buchwald put his own anxieties aside in order to try to help relieve the anxieties of many: he pleaded to Britain's television public to open their doors to visiting Americans impoverished by the overseas drainage of gold and now too poor to stay in hotels.

Afterwards, while the film was being cut, Buchwald and I accompanied Capp to his suite. Buchwald was wearing a French tweed porkpie hat; but where was the gaiety?

"I don't like hats," he said sombrely. "This is a nice hat if you don't like hats."

"The two funniest men in England," Capp said, "are Tommy Cooper and Kenneth Williams." Buchwald's eyes filled with tears.

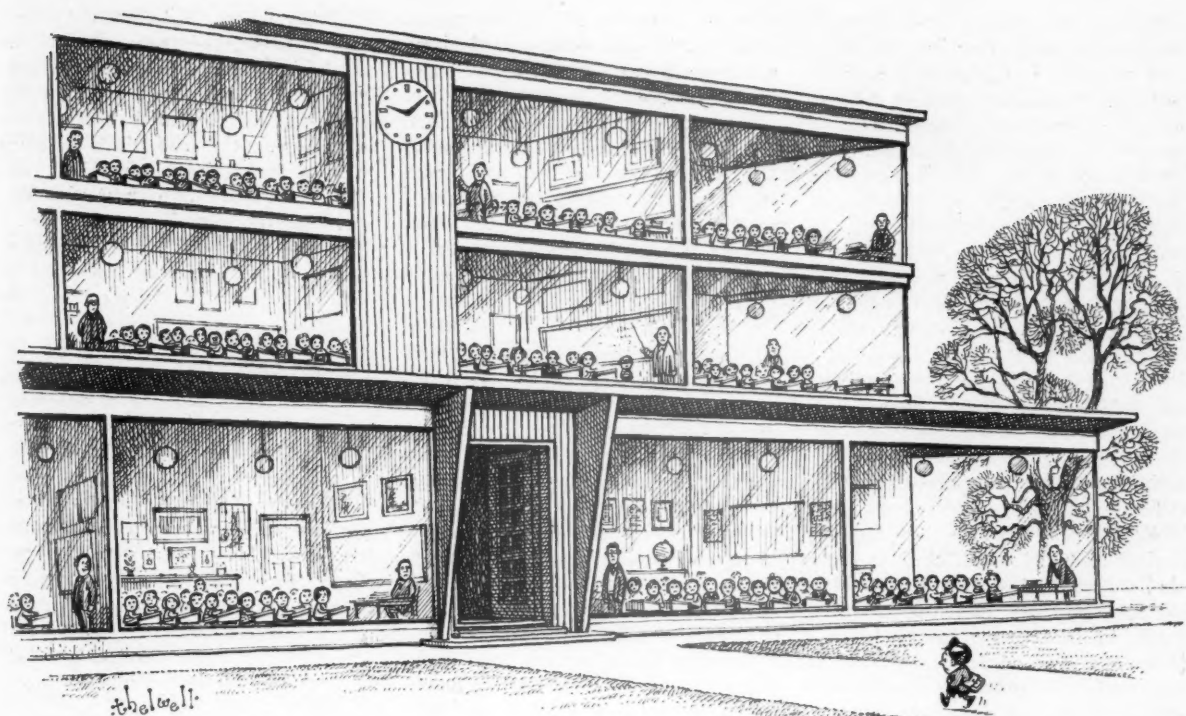
"This, then," Buchwald said, "is the end. Eh, Al, old buddy? I suppose now you're going to be so busy writing your own columns you won't have time to write mine any more."

"We can still meet on television sometimes, Art," Al Capp said. "We can still be friends."

Buchwald didn't seem any more assured when Capp, looking rather like Ed Murrow, but better fed and much less heavily burdened by a sense of destiny, laughed like a volcano.



"I'm not wearing a hat."



## Unconsumed Portions

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

ANYONE would think, reading about those little dabs of yellow on the edges of plates and the fortune they brought the Colman family, that no one else had ever taken this simple road to riches. I don't want to belittle the Colman idea, because it packs a double punch: it isn't only that everyone takes too much mustard once it's mixed; everyone makes too much in the first place, owing to the impossibility of mixing the stuff without having to add more milk because it's too thick, then more mustard because it's too thin, and so on until you've got an eight-ounce basin full to go with a couple of thinnish chippolatas. All the same I'd like to point out that I'm constantly adding to the wealth of other millionaires in just the same way, have been for years.

Where would the wine people be without all the unfinished goblets I

drain down the sink after one of our wine and cheese parties? To say nothing of where would the cheese people be. Though, as a matter of fact, we probably pour less wine away than most. We drink quite a bit of it. Often the highspot of a party at our house is the after-midnight twosome, with dreamy duets and eccentric dancing. But the cheese wastage is terrific, parties or not. I never start taking the greaseproof off a wedge of Cheddar without a light voice trilling, "There's some fresh in the groceries." And what with not fancying the old cheese, cracked and glistening, when there's some fresh, and not feeling like broaching the fresh while there's some old, I more often than not settle for marmalade instead. I don't know what happens to all this old cheese. Sometimes I see a hunk of it on the bird-table, subtly Gruyèred by tiny beaks: some-

times I detect a hint of it in a soufflé, but it can't possibly be more than a shred or two. At a rough estimate I'd say that upwards of six hundredweight of cheese has come through our back door since rationing ended, and if we've actually eaten more than a stone of it I should be very much surprised.

Mind you, I've eaten a lot of marmalade. But with marmalade, again, the more you eat the more you waste. I don't know the precise figures pored over by Mr. Frank Cooper, of Oxford, but my guess is that the amount of his product scraped daily off the nation's cuffs, newspapers, table mats and tea cosies would make a good fifteen hundred two-pound pots, if only some way could be found of returning it to base.

What about sandwich crusts? It's no good saying they come back as bread puddings because I know different.



Regarding the ordinary ten-inch sandwich loaf as having four five-inch sides, and assuming forty dainty slices to a loaf, simple multiplication shows sixty-six feet of crust cut off, so to speak, at the source. Does this figure surprise you? It amazes me, but I haven't time to do the sum again. All I'm saying is that a six-loaf Old Folks' Tea puts a hundred and thirty-two yards of crust in some master baker's pocket. Bread puddings, even in the most addicted communities, simply couldn't absorb it.

But enough of food. Forget the statistics for pastry fused irremovably on the rims of dishes; ignore the mountain ranges of old mashed potato, the spurned dog-biscuit thrown out nightly to make way for new; never mind the rich acreage of rice-pudding skin (yes, yes, I *know* it's the best part) pushed aside by a million kids with wrinkled noses; don't even contemplate the unstirred sugar washed down waste pipes, the racks of over-hoarded vegetables shovelled out into the world's back gardens every hour of the day and night (all right, but remember that the Aleutians are eleven hours back, and building up their compost while you sleep)—forgetting all this, let's reflect on the state London Transport's finances would be in if you and I didn't keep leaving buses after a threepenny ride, terminating what we'd planned at first as a sevenpenny journey: heaven knows, the state they *are* in is bad enough, but

it's only the steady sale of the same seat twice that stands between us and giving the conductors a banker's draft.

Or consider the happy condition of the lighter-flint industry. I imagine I'm not alone in the premature ditching of the bottom half—or the top, some might call it, looking for an argument—of every flint while I think of it, and putting in a new one just in case this is the day I'm going to be asked for a light by a blonde stranger. This means that every purchase of a dozen costs me eighteen, and explains why flint-tycoons ride about in their thirty-foot limousines lighting their cigars with matches. The case of the ballpoint pen refill is almost exactly parallel (provided you don't push the thing to absurdity just out of captiousness and try to sign a guest in at the club with a cigarette-lighter—an incident more likely to be witnessed at my particular club, as it happens, when member and guest are on the way out, or at any rate trying to find it).

Consider again, if you can bring yourself, the field of proprietary medicines and cosmetics. Cast a mental eye,

if handy, along the bathroom shelves and dressing-table tops of London alone. What do you see? A thousand gallons of costly dregs, and enough lipstick stubs to paint the whole town red. Take the nation's abandoned tobacco-pouches, each with a good tablespoonful of unconsummated smoke; think of the Mediterranean sunshine locked in the foreign coins of a million sideboard drawers; the fag-ends of blank tape on the home recorders, the typewriter ribbons discarded with a good novel-and-a-half left in them still; the Sunday papers unread, the bank balances unclaimed, the dry-cleaning uncollected, the albums of Beethoven unthumbed, the constructional toys unconstructed.

Oh, yes, yes. The Colman family may roar its ribs out every time someone says "Pass the mustard"\*—but they're not the only ones laughing, not by a long chalk. And talking of chalk . . . any figures handy for unconsumed school milk, Miss Melville? Well, never mind. Some other time.

\*A literary allusion

## The Understudy

By LESLIE MARSH



"AND now, Comrade Kozlov, I think we'd better run through a few proverbs."

The speaker was a scholarly man whose Russian title is too idiomatic to translate precisely but a rough English equivalent would be Groomer for Stardom. He was giving the morning lesson in First Secretaryship to Mr. Frol Kozlov, nominated by Mr. Khrushchev as the supremo's successor.

"Many hands make light labour camps—is that the sort of thing you mean?" asked the student secretary hesitantly.

"No, no." The instructor sounded short. "Banal. The homely picture, Comrade—surely you have listened to The Leader? The starving wolf grins when the burden of the overlaid sledge is lightened, say; something

they can see happening. You'd better study some reports of the Western tours before next Proverbs period. I hope you have been reading up your Comparisons?"

"But of course."

"Suppose, then, that I am an English statesman showing you round the Lake District for a rest between shipyards and steelworks. What are your reactions?"

"Something, I should think, like 'Pretty little walks for your boys and girls, but in our country the Urals rise to over 5000 feet, especially at Töll-poz-iz, and I don't see many rich iron, copper or gold mines about, as at Bogoslovsk and Goroblagodatsk.'"

"That's better, a good deal," admitted the instructor. "How's the Hearty Touch going?"

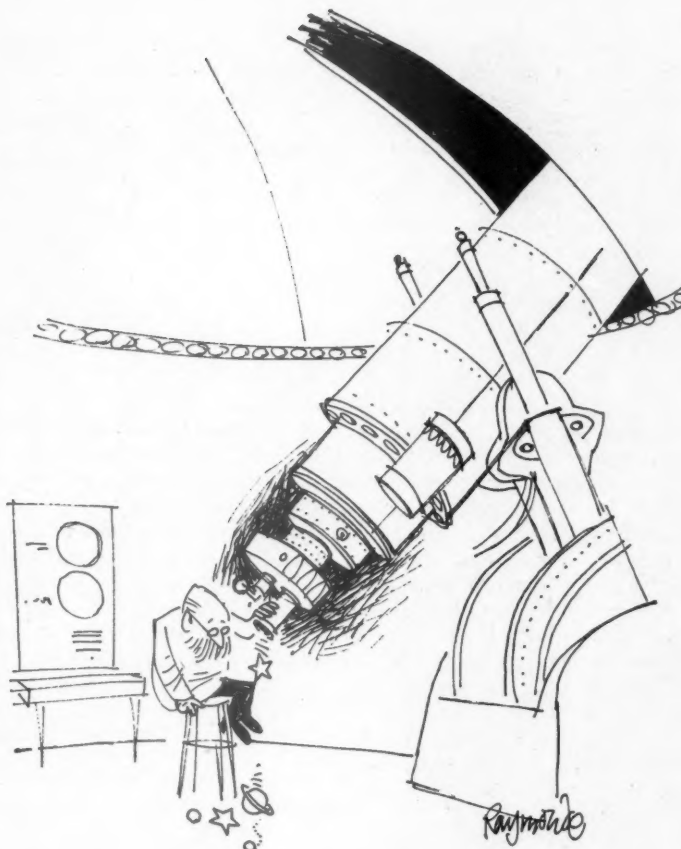
Mr. Kozlov flung back his head vigorously, slightly jarring the nape, laughed homerically, thumped his mentor speechless and bawled, "You are a good fellow. Come and see me at my dacha some time. Don't bring any treaties, just a balalaika and a hunting suit."

"No need to overdo it," gasped the tutor, not yet breathing rhythmically. "That might have killed an elder statesman. Now. I'm a photographer. Carry on."

Mr. Kozlov broke into a Cossack dance routine so robust that the second side-kick caught the instructor's knee briskly and brought an angry yelp: "I keep telling you, don't ham it. Be your age. I know you're only fifty-two but you'll be older than that, a lot, I hope, before you take over. Get settled down now. You're in the conference hall, a dove fluttering into the hyenas' den."

Mr. Kozlov slowed his dance down to a quieter mazurka and then stood four-square, rugged. "We only want peace. How can we have peace when you keep preparing for war? Anything you can bomb I can bomb better than you, but peace is what we want. Why do you call your football clubs arsenals when all we want is peace? I bring you peace, which is what we want, but—"

"Just a minute," interrupted the instructor wearily. "You're getting in a groove. You're trying too hard. I've told you about it before. Relax a bit, now do. Come back to-morrow in a quieter frame of mind. You're getting the least bit provincial. To-morrow I want you to try talking to babies, but there's no need to get goosy over it. I don't want to discourage you, Comrade Kozlov. You've a long way to go. Don't rush your fences. And don't think all the time about gallivanting round the world. There's some homework too. Get on to that grain harvest, for instance—a miserable 110 million tons instead of 150 million as advertised. And if you could get those three horses of ours in the Grand National, so-called African horse sickness or no so-called African horse sickness, it would do you a power of good. Try talking to Mrs. Topham about it, Comrade Kozlov; not an easy lady, I hear, but if you win at Aintree you'll stay the course in Moscow."



## On the Notice Board . . .

... of Sir Joshua P. Chagworthy and Co.  
SHOPPING ON WINDOW-SILLS

I HAVE discovered through personal catastrophe that it is the custom of certain members of the staff—mainly, I assume, those female and married—to buy perishable foodstuffs during the lunch-hour and to place them on the window-sills of this building.

This is done, I conjecture, so that the items may keep fresh till the evening and their purchasers not be incommoded by their effluvium. My supposition is not shared, unfortunately, by the pigeons in the square, who believe that our building is occupied by bird-lovers of exceeding generosity.

This conflict of opinion was brought to my notice yesterday when, as I approached the front entrance, a quantity of herrings, seven in number and some two pounds by weight, fell in shoal upon my head. A pigeon had

apparently failed in its attempt to carry away the packet of fish, eagle-fashion, from the window-sill of the Typing Section.

The unpleasantness of this experience was heightened by the extreme age of the herrings; Commissionnaire Duff, who came to my rescue, estimated by smell that they had been forgotten by the purchaser and left on the sill for at least fourteen days.

Every member of the staff runs the daily risk of being thus struck down by foodstuffs from the sky and it is my duty to announce forthwith that the placing of fish, flesh, fowl, or other articles of shopping on window-sills is now strictly forbidden.

Heads of Sections should make personal inspections to ensure that there are no more forgotten suppers still lodged in crevices of our building.

JOSHUA PELHAM CHAGWORTHY,  
Chairman and Managing Director.



"If it's 'Ban the Bomb' I'm out:  
if it's 'Hands off Holy Loch'  
tell him I'll be down in a jiffy."



"So! You've  
back,



"Speak of the devil!"



## SOMEONE AT THE DOOR

By A. F. WILES



"I'll go."

"I think it's  
the Pembertons."







"It's the man from Littlewoods, dad."

"Good morning, sir.  
I represent—Oh,  
never mind."



"Or then again this one  
should be useful."



Mummy, I'd like you to meet Harold."



"We were just talking  
about you."

"No, young lady, I do not happen  
to have a tablet of piquant perfumed  
purple Jasmine toilet soap in the  
house."

# Mediatrics

*Or the care of the Middle-aged*

By H. F. ELLIS

## 4. "The Knowledgeable Man"— The Advice Dilemma— Dependability— and the Urge to Revolt

**B**Y the time he is forty-five a man has inevitably acquired a considerable store of knowledge. He knows *about* things. He knows about earned income relief, passports, wine, greenfly and where the water turns off. He could write a short note on Jodrell Bank, Lord Boothby, hovercraft, Hitler, life insurance, carburettors, plastic emulsion, the Tate. Such academic knowledge as he once had may have deserted him, but he knows that sealing-wax must be applied to *all* knots on registered parcels and how to get to Lord's. He has certain skills over and above those appropriate to his trade or profession, such as carving joints, mending fuses, blowing through slow-running jets, drilling holes in walls, working out route mileages, dividing up dahlia tubers, tying on flies, changing Hi-Fi needles. Any middle-aged man who cared to make a list of the things he knew a bit about or could do, up to a point, would be astonished at his versatility. Gradually, and almost without conscious effort, he has become what Aristotle would call "the knowledgeable man."

This is not in itself an unhealthy condition. In a perfect environment, consciousness of the ability, as we say, to "cope," the possession of a store of wisdom, practical information and technical know-how that may be thrown open at will for the benefit of others less fortunately endowed, can bring a rich sense of fulfilment and indispensability. Unfortunately the environment of middle-aged men is rarely perfect. The power-house is misused. People, particularly those in his immediate circle, take advantage or at other times decline to avail themselves of the help and guidance that the middle-aged man has to offer, often with serious long-term results. Indeed it may be taken as a Law of Middle Life that advice or assistance freely offered is not wanted; when required it is demanded as of right. This

puts the middle-aged man in the position of a mere cistern without control over his own taps.

### "Jack Will See To It"

It took me some time to get to the bottom of Jack S——'s trouble. Like so many men at his time of life he had no idea of its nature and simply complained of headaches and a feeling of fullness during and between meals. It had not occurred to him that what he was full of was a vast mass of accumulated hints, tips, snippets of information, wrinkles, telephone numbers, short cuts, good places for a quick meal, and so on, of which he was unable to rid himself. But after a brief physical examination and some desultory conversation which led nowhere I tried him with a cigarette, snapping my useless lighter at him three or four times. Then it all came pouring out. It was probably the wheel, he said. Clogged. A pin would do it if I hadn't one of the little brushes they supplied. Or the spring might be weak. Personally, he always took his for an overhaul once a year, regular as clockwork, to a very good man off Welbeck Street. From my place, if I turned right at the corner . . . and so on, and so on. He also, as the conversation developed and expanded, told me what to look out for in school prospectuses, recommended a preparation for removing coffee stains from my tie, and spoke seriously and at some length about the fouling of beaches in Devon and what should be done.

"A man with your know-how and knowledge of the world must be a great comfort to your wife and family," I said deliberately, and saw, as I expected, a swift shadow pass over his face. The diagnosis was now complete. Here was a man equipped to be helpful in almost any known set of circumstances, but seldom if ever given his head. His family *relied* on him, of course; a couple of tactful questions made that clear. If it was some routine problem such as creaking boards, or an overflowing overflow pipe, or getting tickets, or Rosicrucians at the door, it was recognized that he was the man for the job. "Jack will see to it," or "Leave it to your father," was the cry. Nor did they hesitate, if baffled by some problem of their own, or at a loss for a word or a name, to tap his immense reserves of knowledge. But *they* were to be the judges of how much he should say or do



"Sorry—to-night's his club night."



when called upon. Often, I gathered, he would be asked the meaning of "ullage," say, or how to get a rusty screw out, and having dealt with the immediate point would find that his questioner had ceased to listen or simply gone away before he was half-way through what he had to say about brewing or the causes and prevention of rust in general. As for the times innumerable when he had simply to sit in silence watching one of his children using the wrong tool or his wife reading with her book turned away from the light, these had undoubtedly hastened the development of his facial tic and nervous habit of drumming with his fingers. "What's the use of saying anything," Mr. S— demanded, "when all the thanks you will get is a look?"

Here then is the problem of the overcharged battery, to be commonly found in any period from M.M. I to L.M. II—by which time the wish to help becomes desiccated, often giving way to a pretended vagueness and dependence on others. What is its solution?

Nature herself sometimes finds a way. Y— was driving his family back from a dance at the end of a long day, in which his advice and offers of help had been ignored on no fewer than twenty-three occasions, when all the car's lights went out. Strongly affected by the calmly trustful way in which his family sat and waited for him to do something about it, he got out and walked away into the darkness, writing to them later from an island in the Pacific to inquire whether they got home all right. But not all husbands and fathers are capable of so wholehearted a revolt against Dependability. The urge may be there but habit or even affection proves too inhibiting. For the generality of middle-aged men a less drastic cure has to be found.

The solution in nine cases out of ten is to *seek the company of other middle-aged men*. Join a club. Learn, if necessary, to play bridge or snooker. There is an unwritten understanding among men in their forties and fifties—it may almost be called an instinctive Law of Life—that each will listen to the advice and experience of the other in return for a reasonable show of interest in his own. The House of Commons, which has been called the best club in the world,

is a perfect example of this principle in action. But it operates very widely wherever sensible and civilized men gather and talk. It is not to be supposed that persuasion, or even any strong wish to persuade, plays much part in the matter. There is not, when mere acquaintances meet to exchange their expertise, that urgent sense of the *importance* of putting another right that so bedevils a man's relationships with his own kith and kin. If Smith has found that inflating his rear tyres four pounds above the recommended pressure results in a worthwhile increase in m.p.g. he will communicate the discovery to Robinson with little or no sense of nervous stress. He may suspect the sincerity of Robinson's "By Jove, that's worth knowing," but he is not *responsible* for the other's welfare. He has satisfied the natural desire to pass information on, and can sit back quietly while Robinson tells him about a kind of clothes-hanger that allows one to hang the coat up first and *then* the trousers. Conversation of this sort is highly therapeutic. There is give and take, an absence of strain, the warm feeling that old campaigners, veterans of many a battle with life's perplexities, are swapping without stint or envy the rich harvest of experience. How different, how infinitely more rewarding, than the vain struggle within the home circle to help those who, having nothing to give in return,\* will not even affect to pay attention!

One word of caution is necessary. The Knowledgeable Man who seeks a solution of his problems in the company of his contemporaries must always bear in mind that *mutual exchange* is the root and essence of this form of therapy. He will disregard this rule at his peril. The whole question of the Middle-aged Bore will, however, be dealt with in my next paper.

**Next week: Bores**

\* A situation may, of course, arise, particularly in the case of men with children in their twenties still living at home, when other members of the family feel that they have a great deal to give in return. The onset of Premature Knowledgeability in the young is responsible for some of the most distressing cases with which mediocrities have to deal. But the treatment of hysteria and similar "shock" conditions is too complex for discussion here.



## Greek to Me

By RICHARD MALLET

IT was the middle of last June when I went to Athens, but I have souvenirs.

One I see every time I shave. The sun shone all the time—Athens averages just twelve rainy days from June to October—and I wore a tie only once, and still, after more than six months, there is a remnant of that small triangular suffix of tan at the base of the neck, pointing to the spot beneath which, I was gloomily convinced before I went, I should soon be feeling an uninterrupted burning sensation. I was sure that when my digestion met oily Greek food, it would throw the fight.

But it didn't; I ate and enjoyed nearly everything available, much of it swimming in oil and tomato-juice, and had no trouble at all. A great piece of popular wisdom, widely disregarded, reminds you that the inhabitants of a country probably know best about what

to eat and drink while you live there; and after the first day or two I began to have most of my meals in *tavernas*. My hotel was good, but it offered the usual things, and its menu was written in what restaurateurs the world over believe to be French. It was accustomed to visitors for whom any change of diet, let alone plumbing, outweighs travel's only advantage over Cinerama—being able to say afterwards that you actually went.

... And to as many places as you were able to cram into the time. "What did you think of the Islands?" they ask me. "You took in Corfu, I suppose? Rhodes? Sounion? We managed to do Marathon, and Corinth, and—"

"No," I say, "I spent the whole time in Athens." And they say Oh. "Except one day I walked to the Piraeus," I say, "and though the road was—" And they say "Walked?"

I suppose I'm one of the last pedestrians in my income group. I walk even in London, where of course it's quicker, and in Athens I walked nearly all the time, mostly (it seems in retrospect) up. No doubt according to Archimedes I must have walked just as much down, but he came from Syracuse and his evidence in this connection must be treated with reserve. He attempted to improve the Greek system of numeration; I got on all right with it myself.

Up, because Athens is full of little mountains, or mounts ("hills" would only suggest some such misty-grey eminence as Hampstead). Near the top they have fir-trees and scrub and a sprinkling of very large ants, and classical ruins and, a bit further down, modern ruins, and you can walk most of the way up them through little streets that might be anywhere else in the city except that the gradient is about one in two.

From any of them the view is marvellous, but I think I liked the one from the Hill of Nymphs best. No actual nymphs being present—even in Athens these days they tend to wear spike heels, unsuitable for climbing—I gazed without distraction at the city spread out against a background of distant mountains, Lycabettus on the left, the Acropolis on the right...

Ah, the Acropolis; they know you know about that. As I was finding my way up there for the second time (the first time I went on a coach tour, and was photographed lumbering through the Parthenon with an expression of bad temper worthy of TV), several tiny boys materialized and began to yell "Acropolis—this way!" I shook my head with what I hoped they'd recognize as false geniality; I didn't want to be led there. They persisted, walking in front of me and pointing up, and at last I thought Oh, well, and made a move to go down again. "No, no!" cried the tiniest, irritated, and plucked my sleeve and pointed in the proper direction. I still shook my head, and after a pause he said "Amereekan? ... Ger-man? ... Franch? ... Engleesh?" I chose the





"Now that's what I call a religious revival."

last of these alternatives and he seemed nonplussed, none too soon.

The first assumption is always that one is an American. English is common. But I carried one or two books (the only trouble with pocket-size books is that they're made to go into an empty pocket), and found some useful Greek in the *Blue Guide*. "Please" is *parakalo* and "Thank you" is *evkaristo*, but there seems to be no word in the list meaning "Sorry." Whenever something went wrong and an apology might have been expected, I simply got a radiant beam and an explanation of *why* it was wrong; which really did just as well, even if I didn't understand it. The Forms of Address, which include not only Sir! Madam! Old man! Boy! Girl! Mister mayor! Doctor! Father! and Your Reverence! but even Monsignor! I didn't use. All of them were obviously in a tone of voice I should hesitate to take with anybody.

Also I got a good deal of entertainment and help from a rudimentary, schoolboy acquaintance with the Greek

alphabet (I like to think of this as one of the things I have in common with Shakespeare). Once, sitting outside a café, I was pleased to be able to work out laboriously from the wall plaques that I was at the corner of Democritus Street and Solon Street—get a load of those associations! But the names in the film advertisements were the most fun. Richard Widmark turned out to be (as near as I can get to it without bothering the printer) RITSARNT GOUINTMARK, and Dirk Bogarde was NTERK MPOGKART. Also, working backwards from English, it was useful to be able to recognize the significance of ANDRON and GYNAIKON on a street sign.

*Retsina* wine—at a meal in a *taverna* this comes in a little coloured metal jug, with a tiny tumbler which it fills twice—I didn't mind a bit, even after being disconcerted soon after my arrival by noticing precisely the same smell from the polish when I was having a shoe-shine. The celebrated aperitif *ouzo* also cheered me regularly, though I have to

admit that I wouldn't, I literally would *not* be able to detect any difference at all between a glass of *ouzo* and a glass of iced water thoroughly impregnated with my regular brand of toothpaste. I drank innumerable cups of thick sweet Greek or "Turc" coffee; waiters at most places would offer an alternative, which they usually described as "Franch." If one ordered that, they would go to the counter with the cry "Nesc!" Beer I had only once; it was described in notices as MPIR, but that wasn't the only reason.

I saw plenty of Greeks meeting, but I didn't see a single tug of war. If that surprises you, you've been misled by a popular misquotation. And I didn't stay long enough to get to know any Lawrence Durrell characters, but I hope to go again.

☆

#### Automation—Latest

"We wish you to enjoy Romance in the perfect condition in which it left our factory."—From a chocolate box



## A Zone of Hush

By GWYN THOMAS

**W**HEN Ralph Kermodey won the bowls competition for the third year running it was decided that a photograph of Ralph should be hung in the bowls pavilion with a plaque on it saying: "Ralph Kermodey, King of the Green." At its unveiling Kermodey was to be asked to give us a short talk on how, over the years, he had mastered the mysteries of bias and the run of the turf.

But it did not come off. Kermodey refused to be photographed. Two delegations went from the bowls committee to coax him out of this attitude but he would not budge. It created a lot of talk. People who had been knocked out of the competition by Kermodey and who had always regarded his style of play as being on the negative and spoiling side said they were not surprised. Anyone, they said, with Kermodey's appetite for sending his opponents' woods scattering into the gully must be fleeing from the police or a clutch of abandoned wives.

These stories got back to Kermodey and they worried him. He is the senior assistant in a shop that sells seeds and gardening equipment and he has the kind of serene, thoughtful, neighbourly face that goes with that sort of business.

He sent for me. He told me he wanted to explain his

objection to the photographer. "I am not fleeing from anybody," he said. "The police have never wanted me. Nor have I ever been married. I know that I've got a pretty bold stroke when it comes to sending down a bowl at a closely surrounded jack on a quick-running rink, but don't let that deceive you. My trouble is shyness. And, of course, that business of the lion."

"Lion? Tell me about that."

He told me. It was a slow, sad story. Years of trafficking in seed and telling clients that not all seeds come up had slowed Kermodey's conversational style to a crawl.

It seems that Kermodey set out originally to become a barber. At fourteen he was apprenticed to a barber called Hedley Benbow who had opened a new shop in the small seaside town of Ferncove. Benbow was a nervous but thrusting man who was out to introduce a higher, blander note into the barbering of Ferncove. He had "Benbow-Coiffeur" written in gold lettering on his window. He also cultivated a line in non-stop banter that sent dozens of customers running out into the street half-clipped. This, and a tendency among the men of Ferncove to copy the hairstyle of Lloyd George, had reduced Benbow's business to a standstill.



It was during this lull that Kermodey joined Benbow. In the absence of customers Benbow worked on his assistant. He fitted him up with a short white coat and a set of waves in his hair meant to advertise the business. Benbow had put his all into this masterwork and a slow walk around Kermodey's head showed you a sample of every school of waving in the world. The only effect of this was to make Kermodey the most lacerated butt in Ferncove. Benbow also treated the boy to a stream of theories about the art of coiffeur that wore Kermodey mentally down to the canvas.

"Fate has led me to work among pygmies, Ralph, and if this keeps up I shall find myself with a pair of long-handled pruning shears as my only tool."

At just that time those two unflagging entrepreneurs of the zone, Wynzie Phipps and Ludo Brisk, had bought a small menagerie from a dipsomaniac showman who was tired of seeing animals on both sides of his delirium. No one blamed him for selling. The creatures in his show were the oldest and least attractive ever brought in from the wild. Their morale was down to rock-bottom and they wore their cages defensively, like overcoats. The menagerie had been ignored by the public. When Wynzie took over the only bit of attention the deal got was a warning to Wynzie from a council official to freshen the place up a bit or move out of town.

One day Wynzie was in Benbow's saloon for a trim. They were discussing the quality of the rock-bottom on which they and Wynzie's animals seemed at that moment to be resting. At Wynzie's suggestion they went up to the menagerie. They took the apprentice with them. Kermodey was glad to be on the move, but as soon as he got inside Wynzie's zoo he changed his mind and wished himself back in the saloon being driven mad by Benbow's analysis of the hair trade.

In the menagerie they sat around the huge, almost bald gorilla, throwing bananas at it. This, Kermodey told me, was in its quiet way one of the most sinister tableaux he had ever seen, and he could hear an inch more of his nervous fibre ravel every time the animal brought its teeth to work on a fresh bit of fruit. It gave a short, harsh chuckle every time it threw a new skin right at Kermodey, as if saying that it doubted the validity both of breath and bananas.

"What we need," said Wynzie, "is publicity."

"You're right," said Benbow. "And the more spectacular the better."

Then Wynzie had an idea so bright he took off his black homburg and stroked his head with pride. He wanted Benbow to cut Kermodey's hair inside the lion's den. Benbow, who hadn't caught the last two words of Wynzie's statement, laughed and said he thought it was a very good idea. "Mr. Benbow," said Kermodey, "Mr. Phipps said the lion's den."

Benbow changed colour and told Wynzie that he was not at his best while working close to animals. Even with sheep passing outside his shop he had known his touch to falter.

"I like the idea, Wynzie. It's bold, like you. I can see myself inside the cage with Ralph but we'd have to be there alone."

"Just come and see this lion," said Wynzie.

He took them over to the cage which was surrounded by some rocks and greenery to suggest jungle. The lion lay in a corner, as still as a hairy rock. Wynzie said that ever since he had taken over the menagerie the animal had been sunk in the same type of complete torpor.

"The food we put in there vanishes, so it must eat. But I've never seen it stand. You could be in there clipping away at that boy's hair thirteen to the dozen, with the Ferncove Mixed Choir standing around and singing loud, yet that lion wouldn't shift."

Benbow gave a doubting laugh modelled on the one he had heard from the gorilla and went off to "The Ferncove Arms" for a few gills. There, in the snug, he was introduced by Wynzie to a man who, said Wynzie, had spent years in Africa. The man came back to the menagerie with them and stared hard at the lion. He said this was probably the oldest lion unstuffed. Its face had the sunken look of the utterly toothless and if it ever stood up it would leave its mane on the floor to have less to carry.

"And you can take his word for it, Mr. Benbow," said Ludo Brisk, pointing at the stranger. "He was a white hunter. Shook hands with Cetewayo."

This man told Kermodey years later that he had never been farther south than Lynmouth by steamer and he had never heard of Cetewayo. But he made a big impression on Benbow, whose mind, between ale and despair, was now giving out the poorest possible signals. He said that not only would he cut Kermodey's hair cheek by jowl with the lion but would also give him a manicure to follow sitting on the gorilla's knee.

On the day arranged, Benbow and Kermodey turned up at the menagerie with long, snowy-white coats. A small crowd had gathered. They were silent and glum and their main wish seemed to be to see Benbow eaten and Wynzie



"Discoloration of right eye, front tooth missing, facial bruises."

gaoled as a nuisance. A youth was trying to provoke the lion into an ugly mood by prodding at it. Wynzie caught this youth a clip that sent him reeling into the shadows. The lion stayed deep in its coma and Benbow pointed this out to Kermodey with a delighted smile. Benbow was snipping gaily with his scissors and saying that when he had finished with Kermodey he would give the lion a short back-and-sides. A few people looked as if they might be going to give Benbow a brief cheer for blitheness, but at that moment Wynzie was letting them into the cage. Benbow's scissors fell still and the only sound in the whole menagerie was a baritone snarl from the gorilla. Kermodey was carrying the chair on which he was to sit.

Benbow set to work. Between the cold eyes of the crowd, the smell of the cage and the sound of the gorilla which was bringing a note of genuinely human malice into its voice, Benbow's movements had become brusque and even dangerous. The cage's floor was also very rough, eroded by pacing paws and time, causing Kermodey's chair to rock, and in the first two minutes Kermodey's ears were wounded. The sound of Benbow's scissors had made the lion open his eyes. He was quite clearly watching Benbow but there was no hint of a fixed mood or programme on his face.

Then the crowd parted to admit Ludo Brisk, Wynzie's partner. Ludo had set up as a beach photographer and had produced some of the dimmest prints in the history of film. He was now carrying a big, black box and he shouted to Benbow and Kermodey that this was his equipment for elaborate studio jobs.

"This photograph will be in all the national dailies," he said, "so it'll have to be good. And I'm using a flash. So don't be disturbed."

And Ludo started pouring some sort of explosive powder into a pan. He did not seem sure about the right dose of this material to use, and it struck Kermodey that Ludo was laying it on with a grossly heavy hand. He must have taken

advice from a man who was used to the recipe for removing quarry faces.

Ludo ignited the powder and kept saying that he was glad he had now reached this exciting stage of camera work. Had Benbow been able to see what Ludo was up to he would have told him to take his box and wade out to sea. But Ludo was crouching low over his work and Benbow was concentrating hard on Kermodey's head. The powder in Ludo's pan roared into life. There was a bang that sent the gorilla and about twelve voters on to their backs, and a flash that gave Ferncove its best light since the Figure Eight was set ablaze by a pyromaniac lay preacher in 1911. Ludo and his camera were hurled into the crowd. Benbow and Kermodey suddenly felt the cage begin to bulge with fur and fury.

Ludo's explosion had touched the lion's last nerve. It came through the air at full stretch, headed right for Benbow. He whipped the chair from under Kermodey, having seen some performer use this very type of article to fend off lions. The lion ignored Kermodey as if feeling it had nothing to fear from anyone sitting on the floor of its own den. Wynzie opened the door of the cage and Benbow and Kermodey shot through it like a pair of lizards.

The next day Kermodey signed up for a lifetime in the seed trade.

"And that is why I hate photographers," he said.

I promised to find him one who normally works outside menageries and in ordinary sunlight, and he's agreed to let me have that portrait for the bowls pavilion.

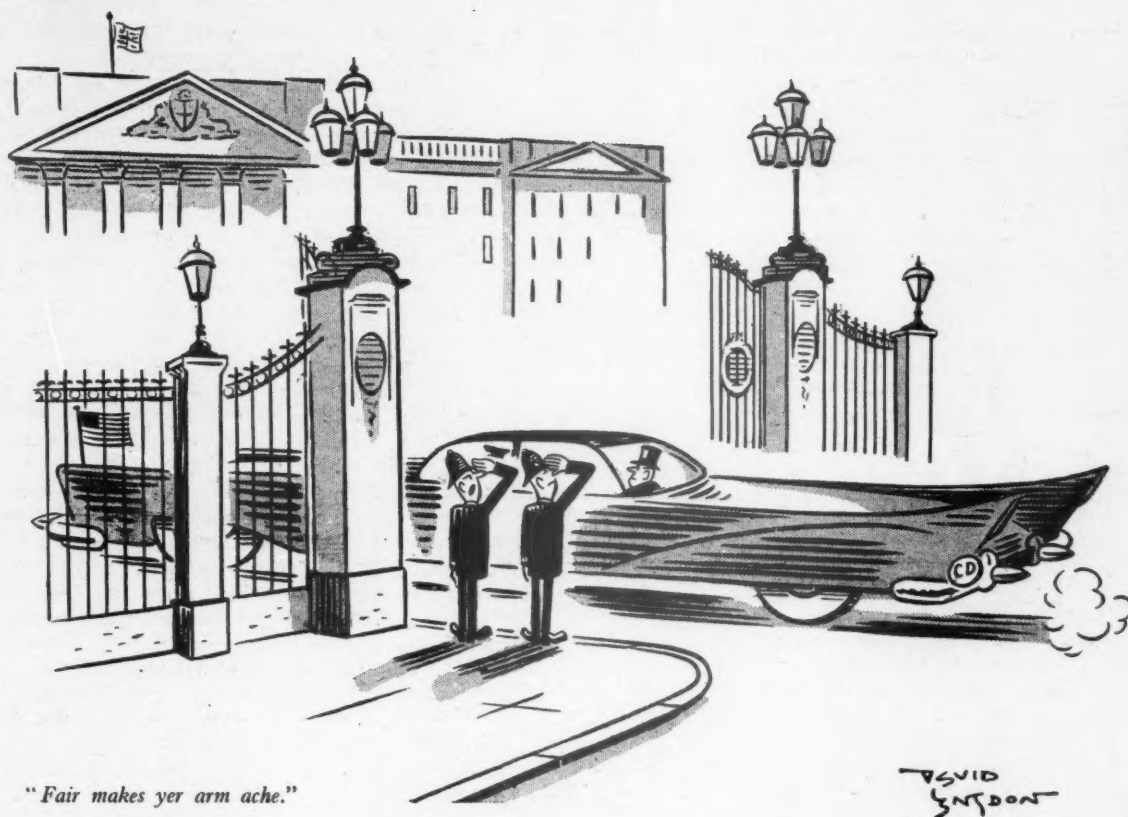
## The Deserted Village

To establish rights in the deserted village of Imber, Salisbury Plain, turned into a battle practice ground during the war, evacuated villagers will march in protest next Sunday, defying a Government order to close the roads.



SWEET Imber, loneliest village of the Plain,  
Where yeomen fight to win back their domain,  
Where smiling Spring its earliest visits paid,  
Followed by tank, bazooka, hand grenade;  
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,  
Trampled by troopers camouflaged as trees;  
Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,  
Where trenches scar the tilth of yesterday.  
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,  
Too long by Whitehall wizards were denied,  
While words of learned length and thund'ring sound,  
Kept telling them they could not have their ground,  
And still they gazed and still the wonder grew  
That such big heads should have so small a clue.

— GOLDSMITH AND MARSH



"Fair makes yer arm ache."

## Letter Home

By R. G. G. PRICE

DEAR MATER,—I am doing well at Fagin's and he says the Personnel Characteristics Review Board has marked me "Promising"; but the work is dreadfully hard. "Champ" Jenkins and "Coshier" Trapp have flunked the Securities Recognition Course. They say they are not going to have another try but have left to join a gang that hangs about under an archway at Peckham and waits until a passer-by carrying a firm's wages comes along. Fagin was very sarcastic about them and what he calls "steam felony."

We have to get up very early and do the assault course in under three minutes before we get any breakfast. No talking is allowed at meals as we have to read the papers and know about everything that's going on. The Blackmail Section, who are allowed to

leave the top button of their waistcoats undone, have to read not just the pop papers but *The Times*. The food is very good as we have to look at home in fashionable restaurants. Classes begin at half-past eight! This morning we started off with Speech Habits. We have to talk like the B.B.C. Northern Ireland. This puts the police off when we are described by eyewitnesses.

If you get under half marks in any period you get a black mark and when you get six black marks you get a whacking. Fagin is very down on what he calls "sloppy education" and says that when your life and liberty depend on your being efficient there is no place for softness. About three guys a month get not just the cane but the birch. Last week it was "Frenchy" Biggs. He threw pepper into the wind and it got into the instructor's eyes and he

went sick for four days. "Frenchy" said it was only a mistake but Fagin said there's no room for misfits here. He quoted a chunk from Dr. Arnold and then gave "Frenchy" the works.

Next week I start Gelignite. It is one of the hardest of the courses as there is a lot of difficult maths in it. The course most of the guys like best is Wall- and Floor-Cutting. There is something soothing about sitting in a deserted flat or shop and quietly burrowing out of it. The Research Section have developed a portable tunnelling-shield that is a beauty to work with. To keep up morale we wear headphones while we work, apart from the lookout at the monitor-screen, and the music is very soothing and improves our rate of progress. Fagin believes that a contented gang is an efficient gang. House Prefects are allowed molls.



The other day we had a lecture from a very distinguished Old Boy who is now a Chief Security Officer. He says that since the social status of crooks has improved the old type of informers, what used to be called "narks," find it difficult to make a living. Crooks do not come into the cheap bars or cafés any more and the informers never get near a really big crime. One who used to do a big trade in tipping-off burglaries has given up and now concentrates on minor sex crimes and has even fallen so low he will inform on passport offences, like the man signing the form not really being a parson at all. This speaker emphasized that he wished he had worked harder when he had been at

Fagin's; but he ended by cheering us up and telling us that sometimes the guy who does not do much while he is learning shoots ahead and astonishes everyone once he is out into the world.

I am hoping to make a good showing in the Sports. I have entered for the Unarmed Combat, the Obstacle Driving, the Steel-cutting and the Counter-jumping. Last year's Victor Ludorum was "Chiv" Burnaby, who did the Bank of England job. He thought out the scheme of having a false piquet himself. Fagin always gets somebody right at the top to present the cups. This time it's to be "Pilot" Forbes, whose record goes right back to the Anarchist Dynamiters of Shoreditch.

It was him, sorry, Mater, I am forgetting my Social Acceptability lectures, it was he who escaped from the Moor by posing as a Prison Visitor. It took him six months to make the teeth.

How is Uncle Harold? Can he receive letters yet? If you visit him, tell him I have learned a new way of getting the watermark right. Is Susie out yet? It may be tactless, but I know that when I see her I shall say right out that it was a mistake to try to get the court to accept Lanky as a psychiatrist. He simply does not have the poise. All that business pretending he was reared in the Boverly may be all right for a palais-de-dance but it cuts no ice in the witness box.

Our Law Lecturer is our Pathology Lecturer's brother. He is finding keeping up with all the branches of Law too much for him and next term we are going to have a separate Lecturer in Fraudulent Conversion, Embezzlement and Larceny as a Bailee. This will let the present man concentrate on Offences against Property and the Person and the Law of Evidence, which are his strong points. He has published a great tome on the Law of Evidence which is very cleverly slanted. Do you remember my telling you about "Mixer" Fishguard, who took Post Office Routine? He has been cited as a co-respondent in a divorce case and Fagin has sacked him.

Thank you very much for the hamper. Do you think that next time, while not spending any more, you could put in one bottle of champagne instead of a dozen of beer? And while I have always enjoyed your mutton-fat rolls, the chaps here have their hampers checked by the Master-in-Charge of Gastronomy and he is more likely to pass caviare in some form or other.

I have had my first contribution accepted for the Magazine. It is an evocation of what it feels like to be dressed as a plain clothes detective on a night in June outside the head branch of a private bank. Fagin himself said it showed "a perceptive approach to the problem of pre-action tensions." From him that is pretty high praise. He is dour but underneath that terrifying exterior there is a man we are all proud and delighted to serve. The dear old place won't be the same when he is gone.

Your affectionate son,

CHARLIE

## THEN AS NOW

*A century after Lincoln's inauguration, the racial problem will still give Mr. Kennedy several headaches when he moves into the White House.*



### THE AMERICAN DIFFICULTY

PRESIDENT ABE. "WHAT A NICE WHITE HOUSE THIS WOULD BE, IF IT WERE NOT FOR THE BLACKS!"

May 11 1861

## Buying Business

By R. SQUIRE

SOMETIMES on the train home from work in the evening I wander along to the dining car and join the buyers at the bar, for there is much that is uplifting in the company of buyers, especially to people who only go to an office to work. Their conversation is full of the romance and drama of big business, and if you feel like a worm after being kicked around all day by the hide and skin trade or the wholesale sack business or whatever it is, you will find it puts heart into you again.

They are not difficult men to mix with, in spite of being the élite troops of industry, the Prætorian Guard of commerce; you can walk right up to a group of buyers at the bar and they will make room for you, welcome you, treat you as one of themselves if you know the password; all you say is "I'm buying." At once you will see how democratic they are; good old J.H., who is no less than the head buyer at Blooperdorps in Bond Street, will order a double whisky just like an ordinary drinker; his old friend Henry Hale, chief of the buying department at Stringbag and Twine in Oxford Street, will not only have a large gin and tonic but he admits outright that he was just about to buy a round himself if you had not cheated him of his turn.

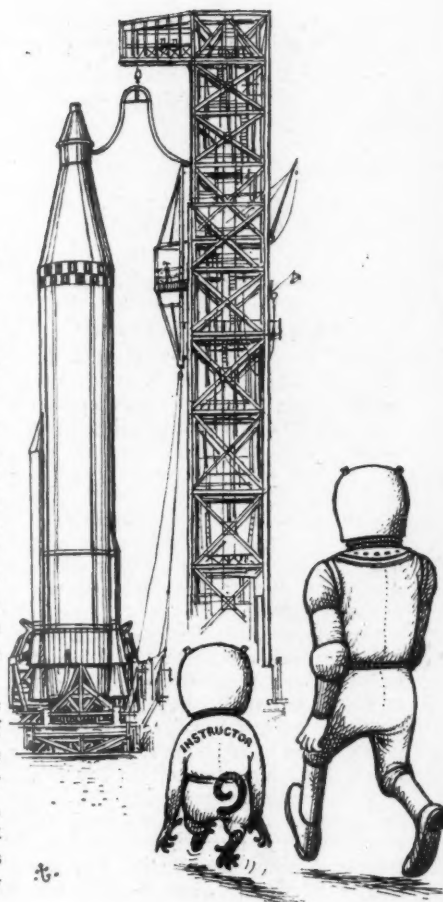
When you listen to them yarning, the downtrodden reality of office life fades and you find yourself in that Valhalla of the business man, the buyer's office. This is not the place where the buyer actually does his buying, but it is a convenient address for the receipt of invitations to lunch, dinner, cocktail parties, week-ends in Paris, skiing holidays in Switzerland, conferences in Rome and fashion shows in Florida. It is also a convenient reception centre for parcels containing manufacturers' samples. These, by the way, are carefully unpacked and thrown away, but the balls of screwed-up white paper wedged all round them are flattened

out and put in the bank, being mainly five-pound notes, with bearer bonds and title deeds mixed in besides.

People who sell to the boys at the dining-car bar do not waste time visiting their offices. That is a sign of the greenhorn salesman, who will be taken care of by juniors trained to invite him into a small room, take his overcoat and give it to a secretary (she runs downstairs and pawns it), go through his pockets, promise to consider him next time and finally throw him downstairs, all without allowing the varlet to utter a word. Meanwhile the actual buyers are out buying; it can be very strenuous, as good old J.H. was saying over his drink.

"Take Caramba Coat and Shirt," he said. "They'd murder me on price if I didn't fight them every inch of the way. Only last night I went to their trade show—well, not exactly a show, they take a room at the Savoy and ask a few of us along from the bigger places who are too busy to go to ordinary shows. I was on to their sales manager. Edward, I said, your prices are hopeless and Carioca Shirt and Coat are offering seven-eighths of a penny below you. I can't even look at you unless you shave a whole penny. J.H., he said, you'll ruin me—here, have another smoked salmon sandwich, it's my heart's blood you're draining. Drink some more champagne and take the bottle home for Mrs. J.H., the dear thing. How is she? I'll bet she looks great in that fur coat we sent her. He went on like that, but I knew he was just trying to get out of shaving that penny. So I stood there like a rock while he filled my briefcase with pots of caviar and theatre tickets, and in the end I said quietly: Edward, you'll have to shave . . ."

"That's the boy, J.H.," said Henry. "I have the same trouble with Wefting and Warp, the folks who are putting my son through medical school. I was pretty sure they were holding out on me for a sixteenth of a penny a yard,



so when I went down to Nice to this hotel they took for their preview, I got old man Warp in a corner and gave it to him straight. Walter, I said, don't run away with the idea that I'm extending any favours to you just because you gave my wife that new Jaguar. Nothing was further from his thoughts, he assured me, so I came straight back at him about this sixteenth of a penny."

Henry paused and looked at his empty glass. It was good old J.H.'s turn to pay and he went for his wallet like a tiger. As it happened, his hand got tangled up somehow and it was I who paid; but that's the way it goes, a man who mixes with the really big people in business has to pay up and look big too.

☆

"One-way plan next year at Cemetery."  
Reading Standard

And this is new?

*In the City*

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**A Lot of What You Fancy**

THE bankers are in good voice this year. This is not altogether surprising. In their own affairs they have very good news about which to discourse. Bank profits in 1960 leapt up, the biggest relative increase being a whopping 36 per cent shown by the Westminster Bank. This was followed closely by Barclays and Lloyds. The other members of the clearing house cannot be said to have disappointed anybody.

Dear money, when it goes as it did last year with continued expansion of credit and a general state of prosperity in which there are few bad and doubtful debts, are the troika whose jingle brings joy to the ear of any banker. Let us not forget that a large part of the banker's stock-in-trade, the money left with him on current account by his depositors, costs him no interest. There are operating costs admittedly, but he charges for them. When therefore the rate charged by the banker for overdrafts, loans and bills goes up, as it did last year, the profits are bound to roll in.

Bank shareholders are at long last getting a more reasonable cut. The dividends this year are well up—and this despite the less than favourable experience of the banks' hire purchase finance subsidiaries. That experience has been ignored, as indeed it should be. The time will come when the banks will gather the harvest of their sowing in the hire purchase field. That is yet another reason for confirming the belief that bank shares have lost the stigma of being one of the most disappointing investments in the Stock Exchange list.

The bank chairmen's speeches would be dull stuff if they merely dealt with the £. s. d. of the balance sheets and profit and loss accounts. These annual occasions are an opportunity to look into the wider world. When the observer is as forcefully eloquent as Mr. Anthony Tuke of Barclays, the result is entertaining and provocative as well as enlightening.

Mr. Tuke is no hard-faced, masochist banker. He thinks the time may now be approaching "when some relaxation, if not positive restimulation, of the economy will be required, other than the recent reductions in Bank Rate." Some concessions on the H.P. front would, he thinks, be reasonable. He has no particular love for the new-fangled technique of special deposits because this hits banks without bringing other lenders under comparable discipline. However, he will accept it if only because it may be wise, in the words of Hilaire Belloc, to "keep a-hold of nurse for fear of finding something worse."

Most bankers loathe inflation but Mr. Tuke does so with special intensity. He is a severe critic of wage-induced inflation. In his opinion the most sensitive and accurate barometer of inflation is the chart which shows the relationship between the numbers of unemployed and of unfilled vacancies. When, he says, a man who loses his job or chooses to give it up has more than one other job from which to choose,

the wage situation is likely to get out of control. The inflationary pressure is the same, whether the demand is for an increase in wages or a reduction in hours. An excessive emphasis on leisure creates the wrong attitude towards work and Mr. Tuke is old-fashioned enough to argue that "it is a little, not a lot, of what you fancy that does you good."

The other enemy of currency is excessive Government expenditure. Mr. Tuke will have no truck with the theory that Government borrowing does not matter if it is offset by the nation's savings. This, he says, is "another economists' delusion." In time of boom, he says, there should be a Budget surplus, debt should be repaid and the money left "to fructify in the pockets of the people." Nothing, says Mr. Tuke, fructifies in the pockets of the Government. That should bring a blush to the cheek of Mr. Selwyn Lloyd who has just told us that next year's estimates will show "large increases."

— LOMBARD LANE

\* \* \*

*In the Country*

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**Pacifists Preferred**

COCK-FIGHTING may be illegal, but cocks will still fight. In fact the Leghorn cockerels in our strawyards never stop. The feuds are deep-seated, obscure, and liable to erupt for no apparent reason. Quite suddenly a bird will decide that the time has come to settle a score and will dash from one end of the yard to the other, bisecting the crowd like a thief at rush hour, in order to assail his adversary.

More often than not the adversary will at once take flight and will be chivvied round the yard by swift jabs from any of his yard mates he happens to bump, but now and again a bird will stand his ground. There will be high tension as the two indulge in the preliminary rituals of a fight to the death, hovering, glaring, quivering, and bristling their ruffs in defiance, a quick thrust here, a parry there.

Fortunately self-preservation normally prevails. Even the smaller and more

truculent breeds of domestic fowl seldom care to go beyond the stage of brinkmanship when there are no females involved in the issue, and the battle fizzles out in a draw, or more likely in the flight of the less ferocious-looking of the pair. None the less the birds still have to be protected from each other and it is the custom on most chicken farms to blunt their beaks by the use of an electric cauterizing iron.

The regrettable part is that belligerence is not confined to males and does in fact present a greater problem among the weaker sex. A hen may have her beak cauterized, but she can still bully others and by doing so she may affect the farm's over-all output; for nothing upsets a hen in her laying as much as persecution by a colleague.

That is why (on our farm at any rate) temperament takes its place alongside productivity, food consumption, and resistance to disease as an essential factor in selective breeding. It is difficult to assess of course, for while the trap system enables every egg laid to be credited to an individual account, debits through intimidation of others have to be guessed. But by eschewing inbreeding, the hot bed of irritability, and by careful observation, we have evolved a hybrid pullet that has not only a high egg potential but is also guaranteed "non-cannibalistic under normal management conditions." A proud claim indeed!

— GREGORY BLAXLAND

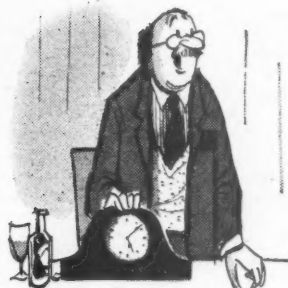


# SPEECH DAY

BY  
GRAHAM



"... er ... not much of a hand at speechifying ... luckiest man in the world ... er ... my wife and I ... awfully nice things said by previous speaker ... hope to see you all at 24, Acacia Road ... not all at once, ha, ha ... Mr. Earnshaw—or should I say Dad ... er ... charming bridesmaids ... er ... behalf of us both ..."



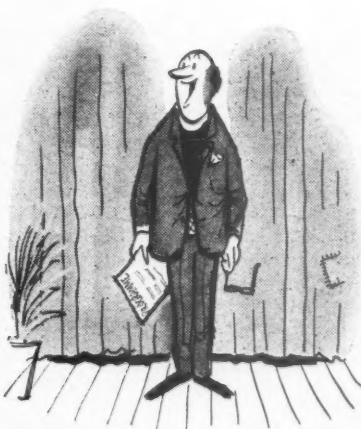
"... generous and unexpected gift ... believe me, could tell a few stories ... can remember when Master Henry was an apprentice ... seen many changes in dear old firm ... if I may, word of advice to younger members of staff ... happiest years of my life ... no electronic computers in those days ... make way for younger man ..."



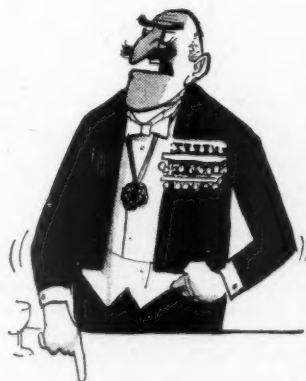
"Pleasant duty has fallen on me ... distinguished old girl ... kind of her to give up valuable time ... words of wisdom ... stand us in good stead in later life ... not forgetting amusing humorous anecdotes ... modest about her own scholastic abilities ... always honoured to see her at college ... call on you all to give ... hip, hip ..."



"... speechless ... those beautiful, beautiful flowers ... wonderful, wonderful audience ... inspiration to any artist ... this lovely, lovely theatre ... always a joy to come to your beautiful city ... heart-warming reception ... behalf of us all ... thank you, thank you ... bottom of my heart ..."



"Turning out on such a miserable night ... remarkable versatility shown by choir members ... not forgetting workers behind scenes ... Mr. Gibson who rose from sick-bed to help with electrical wiring ... these days of TV and canned entertainment ... homespun talent ... healthy fillip for organ fund ... silver collection now be taken ..."



"Spirit of the desert still survives ... finest body of men ever had honour to command ... ordinary British chap ... proved himself in battle ... if may reminisce ... that fateful night ... decision wholly mine ... caught the old fox napping ... had our tails up ... took part in making of history ... kicked him out of Africa ..."



## CRITICISM



### AT THE PLAY

*Ondine* (ALDWYCH)

**O**NDINE, Giraudoux's last play, is a charming fantasy woven out of three moods. It begins as a comic fairy tale, continues as a satire on a small provincial German court, and ends in simple tragedy. As Louis Jouvet showed us in his memorable production at Edinburgh in 1947, its story of the Rhine-maiden who married a human and fatally broke the rules of her kind can be extremely entertaining and very moving. It is a love-story by a poet in which the comic spirit is successfully merged in the dramatics.

Peter Hall's new Stratford/Aldwych production, using Maurice Valency's adaptation, captures the lightness of

Giraudoux but loses a good deal of his poetic feeling. The first act, where Hans, a wandering knight, blunders into the fisherman's hut and is bowled over by Ondine, who is accepted by her bewildered foster-parents as a water-sprite in league with the supernatural, is admirable. It is a fairly straightforward fairy tale, with Ondine and Hans immediately in love with one another, and Ondine taunted by her fellow-sprites and warned by her all-powerful uncle, the King of the Ondines, of the consequences.

In the next act Hans has turned down his betrothed princess, and brought Ondine to court after their honeymoon. Apart from a little tête-à-tête discussion on love between Ondine and the Queen, Mr. Hall has seen it in terms of sheer

pantomime, and I think he tries too hard to be funny. It is quite funny but the knockabout is not the gentle, civilized humour of Giraudoux; it is too much like the court of Ludwig of Bavaria as ragged by the Crazy Gang. Ondine's uncle turns up as a strolling magician to perform some astonishing tricks which include the appearance of the Trojan Horse, and make mischief by bringing Hans and his princess together.

In the last act we jump to Hans's ancestral castle by the Rhine on the eve of his wedding to the princess, to whom he has been unfaithful. Ondine, who has gone back in misery six months earlier to the river, is captured in a fisherman's net and brought to trial as a monster. Her uncle steps in to save her from execution and carry out his sentence of death on Hans. There is a brief and beautifully written scene in which they say good-bye, and Hans dies as Ondine's memory of her adventure as a human is already fading.

Remembering the extraordinary impact of the Jouvet production, there is to my mind a failure in the two leading characters to make good the whole of Giraudoux. In the earlier parts of the



Ondine—LESLIE CARON

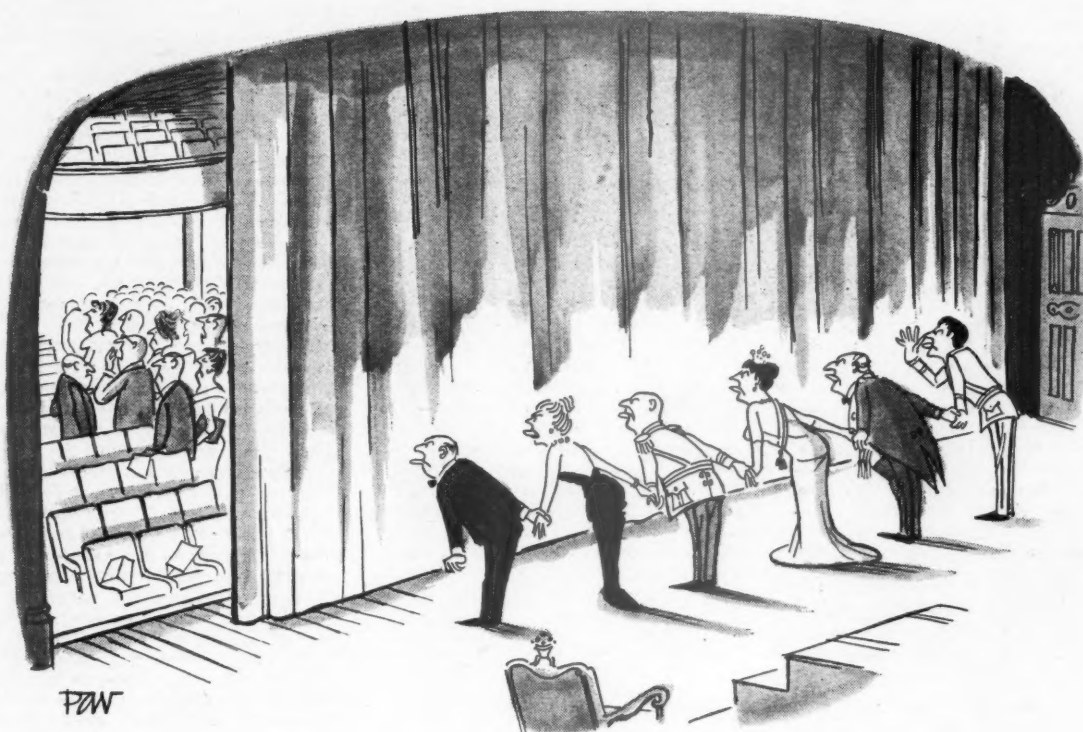
[Ondine

### REP. SELECTION

Playhouse, Nottingham, *The School for Scandal*, until February 4.  
 Guildford Rep, *When We Are Married*, until January 21.  
 Belgrade, Coventry, *Thark*, until February 4.  
 Marlowe, Canterbury, *Chicken Soup With Barley*, until January 21.

play Leslie Caron is an enchanting Ondine, with all the lightness and direct simplicity that are needed; but although she was touching in the end, she failed to move me. And Richard Johnson's Hans, attractive as he was as a romantic figure, seemed to me to lack the emotional depth to bring out the final tragedy.

All the other parts are secondary—Derek Godfrey's magical king, Eric Porter's Chamberlain, Sian Phillips's princess, James Bree's German kinglet and Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies's queen—and they're all played well. Tanya Moiseiwitsch's sets are good, except that from where I was sitting her fisherman's hut masked the magic cave, which denied me a view of the water sprites, and her dresses are imaginative.



### Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)  
*Twelfth Night* and *The Duchess of Malfi* (Aldwych—4/1/61—28/12/60), Stratford's opening London plays in repertory. *Ross* (Haymarket—18/5/60), Rattigan's fine play about T. E. Lawrence. *And Another Thing* (Fortune—21/9/60), bright new revue. —ERIC KEOWN

### AT THE PICTURES

#### *Les Tricheurs*

#### *The Singer Not the Song*

IT's something to be able to see *Les Tricheurs* (Director: Marcel Carné) at last, after more than two and a half years. At first they disguised it as *Youthful Sinners*, but no doubt discovering from the first press notices that more people than they'd thought were aware of the original title, they are now using that in the advertisements. (There is also apparently a dubbed "English version," for people who can't read; but they can call that what they like so long as they don't lead anyone to believe that it's *Les Tricheurs*.)

That English title is one of its handicaps, and another is the way films have developed since it was made. The theme itself has been treated again and again, and from the inside. This is a picture of the amoral, irresponsible young as seen by the older generation; the "new wave" directors have treated it with the vision of the young people actually concerned.

But to let one's judgment be influenced by this is rather like suggesting that *Othello* is old hat because there have been a lot of plays about jealousy since. The point is that this is a story. As a statement about young people, as a picture of their lives and values, it may be dated; but its real interest like that of any story depends on human character, and the effect of one character on another, and the reasons for it, and what occurs as a result. Even though here again the film's age tells against it (for in the past two years the conventions of narrative have relaxed so much that to-day we tend to see melodrama and contrivance in almost anything not an obvious slice of life), I found it gripping and entertaining.

But not, as it should be, very moving. The youngsters are too undeveloped and superficially seen to impress as characters, so that one's interest is mainly in the pattern of incident and the way it uses the circumstances. Admittedly we've been shown the circumstances before—but not by Carné.

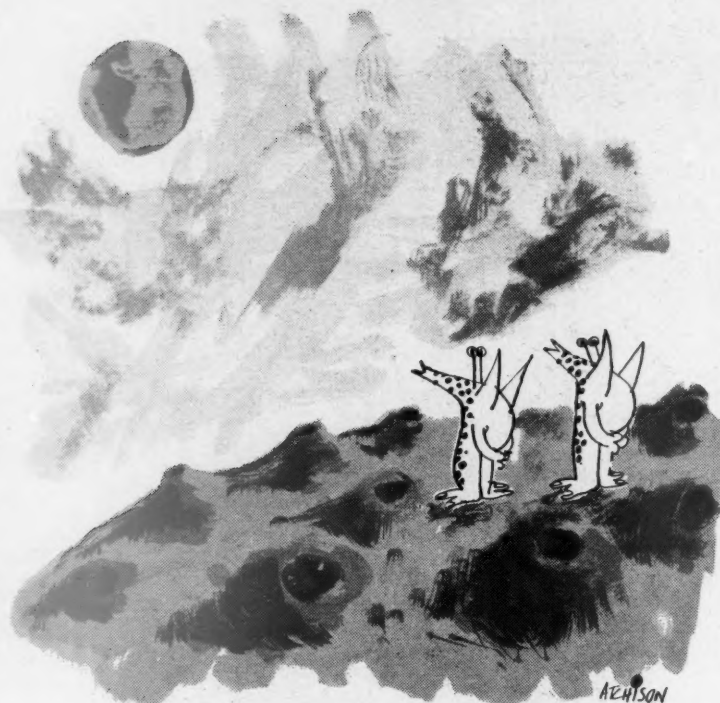
The focus here is a bourgeois young man (Jacques Charrier) who gets involved with the Left Bank beatniks by way of making the acquaintance of one (Laurent Terzieff) whom he sees stealing a record in a shop. Gradually—this is very well done—he comes to agree with their values, to stifle his conscience and feel ashamed of showing any sign of natural human emotion or acceptance of conventional morals. His casual affair with Mic (Pascale Petit) becomes some-

thing deeper, but because each wants to be regarded as no less tough and heartless and unprincipled than the rest of the group neither will admit it. The key, in fact, is self-consciousness, the ordinary youthful wish to show off and impress. Towards the end, when the two are together at a wild party, all would be well if the girl were sincere and showed the young man that she loved him, and one knows that if they were alone she would; but she feels herself watched by the others, and can't resist putting on an act to show them how hard she is. The result is tragedy.

If we'd seen this when it was made, and the present showing were a revival, it would be getting a much better press. Why? Is it less good in itself now than in 1958?

*The Singer Not the Song* (Director: Roy Baker) is an unsuccessful mixture of a familiar kind of Western, with the villain of course all in black except (cunning move) while pretending to have mended his ways, and a novelettish tear-jerking story of self-sacrifice with heavy overtones of religiosity. Thus the attempts of the new priest (John Mills) to reform the evil young boss (Dirk Bogarde) of the little Mexican town are interrupted now by miscellaneous gunfire, ambushes, street battles and other fights, now by earnest talk, which he doesn't recognize as love-talk till she asks him outright to kiss her, with the beautiful daughter (Mylène Demongeot)





"Whichever gets here first, I suppose we'll have to look out for our women!"

of a leading citizen. Much of the film is beautiful to look at (CinemaScope, unspecified colour: Otto Heller), but it's a glossy patchwork of commercialism. And, believe it or not, in this elaborate expensive work dated 1961 the villain, disappointed in some henchman, produces the celebrated villain's snarl: "Why must I be surrounded by fools?"

#### Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The best in London you hardly need reminding of: *L'Avventura* (7/12/60), *Shadows* (27/7/60 and 26/10/60), and *La Dolce Vita* (21/12/60). Then there are *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (9/11/60) and *Elmer Gantry* (28/12/60). I thought better than most of *Love and the Frenchwoman* (4/1/61), and not so well of *Shoot the Pianist* (21/12/60) and *Never on Sunday* (30/11/60).

Releases are rather a dim lot. Those mentioned here: *Man in the Moon* (16/11/60—99 mins.), familiar British fun; *Under Ten Flags* (14/12/60—112 mins.), war at sea; and *The Criminal* ("Survey," 9/11/60—97 mins.), prison life and robbery. — RICHARD MALLETT

#### ON THE AIR

##### Magazine Selection

IN an ordinary weekday about forty hours' broadcasting is done on the Home, Light and Third. Roughly half of this time is devoted to music (at least half of it on the Light) and the remainder is devoted to words, which

makes over 100,000 words—most of them intelligible and many informed by actual thought. Allowing for the odd services that go out to the provinces, that makes about a million words a week, with ideas to match.

Obviously there is not nearly that amount of straight information—News and Newsreel stuff—available, and there is a limit to the amount of plays, dramatized novels, serials and so on that can be put out, so a very fair proportion of these words are devoted to entertainment and "talk." Neither of these things can be endured by the average listener in long stretches, so there is a tendency—Reith Lectures and such apart—for them to appear as gobbets of talk or "variety" which then coagulate into "magazines" or variety programmes.

I have been listening, purposively, to most of the magazines for a few weeks and have come to the conclusion that the more they are about something the better they are, or rather the easier it is for them to be worth listening to. Most programmes on Network Three, for example, are in the form of magazines on special subjects; though car-talk is one of the special tediums of our civilization, *Motoring and the Motorist* can run on steadily, knowing quite well that it deals with a subject of such absorbing interest to many people that even if it were a bad programme it would still have its listeners. As a matter of fact it is far better than it need be, varied, aggressively pro-motorist and quite free from jargon. *Parents and Children*, too, deals

with a subject which concerns most of our lives and seems to dominate more and more of our small talk; it always demands enough thought to keep the listener's mind at a stretch, often has an interesting scientific bent, and avoids nursery tattle; until recently it has included a really excellent series of discussions between mothers, *Three Friends*, a model of the way intelligent conversation can be moulded into a programme.

To-day is less immediately "about something," but the topicality inherent in its title gives it grist to grind on, and the BBC's marvellously widespread ramifications mean that there is almost certainly a man in Antananarivo who can whisk through a snappy recording of his impressions of the scene at the moment Dr. Castro declared the island a Cuban enclave. The temptation must be to use this method too much, but the programme is nicely balanced between the earnest and the trivial. *Roundabout*, which works roughly the same field in what I take to be a very off-peak hour on the Light, is more of a hotch-potch, with records, an interview with a star perhaps, something serious, and so on. I have seldom felt it hangs together.

In contrast to all these, *Monday Night at Home* is, so to speak, "pure" magazine—it isn't about anything. It is extremely well done, pleasantly compèred, with its individual bits of fun separated skilfully by chosen bits of music (though they might take the opportunity of playing some of them twice running, which would mean that they could risk something rather more taxing and the listener might have learnt to like it by the second time), but when it's all over I have the feeling that I have been chewing away at one of those diabetic rolls. There is nothing to digest. I hear it is fairly popular, with a loyal body of listeners writing friendly and complimentary letters to the performers. (This makes an interesting contrast with the written word: if you appear in print, readers write angrily to say that they disagree with your ideas; if you speak, they write amicably because they feel you have a sympathetic personality.)

I cannot write about *Woman's Hour* because I never hear it unless I am sick enough to be in bed, but my informant tells me it is running along cosily.

— PETER DICKINSON

#### PUNCH INDEX

The indexes of *Punch* contributions are now issued separately. The latest, for July to December, 1960, may be obtained free on application to the Circulation Manager, PUNCH, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Readers who have their copies bound in the standard binding covers need not apply. The indexes are supplied with the covers.

# BOOKING OFFICE

VU, VU, DES MES PROPRES YEUX VU . . .

By JOANNA RICHARDSON

**They Saw It Happen.** An Anthology of Eye-witnesses' Accounts of Events in British History, 1897-1940. Compiled by Asa Briggs. Blackwell, 30/-

**A**NTHOLOGIES and digests are not my cups of tea. *The Golden Treasury*, the Oxford Books of various kinds of verse, are not for me. I like to choose for myself, to use my own intellectual digestive system. All the same I am grateful to Professor Asa Briggs. He has given me several hours of instructive, lively, varied reading.

*They Saw It Happen* is a scrapbook for the years 1897-1940: it takes us from the Land of Hope and Glory of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee to the Land of Hope and Glory which faced Dunkirk. It takes us from the height of prosperity to the height of crisis, from the moment of unshakeable stability to the moment when traditional stability had to be re-found and proved again. Professor Briggs gives us eye-witness accounts of great events, and the same events recollected in tranquillity. He gives us the immediate and the retrospective views of people and of trends, and draws a nice balance between the stylish and the clinical, the emotional and the precise, the gay and the grim. He gives us in fact, in the words of other men, a vivid running commentary.

The most delectable chapter in these 500 pages is Sir Harold Nicolson's memory of an Edwardian week-end, of the "jade and lobster of the Edwardian epoch": of the ostentatious over-eating, the futile filling of the hours between breakfast and luncheon, between luncheon and tea, and, again, between tea and dinner. (Ptarmigan and champagne. Champagne and ptarmigan.) The account is so vivid that we can taste "the things like ginger biscuits and aubergines and French patisseries" that these Edwardian houses kept in case the King came: the King who conquered Paris with a four-sentence speech in French, the "loveable, wayward and human monarch" (to quote his Assistant Private Secretary) who terrified his most intimate friends and was "by far the biggest

man and the most striking personality in Europe."

The Edwardian panorama, and the brief glimpse of the Victorian Age that precedes it, have the most glamour for the New Elizabethan. But there are striking *aperçus* of the First World War, of the years between, and of those who peopled them. There is Captain Scott writing his last journal entry in Antarctica. There is Kitchener, who (to quote Sir Osbert Sitwell) plainly belonged to some "rare, distinguished sect such as the Four Marshals of China, those vast figures with angry, bulging eyes, daubed faces and drawn swords, who guard the entrance to every Chinese temple." There are the intractable Fisher, the disruptive Lloyd George, and Smuts in a moment of genius, settling a miners' strike at Tonypandy by asking his hostile audience to sing him *Land of My Fathers*. We can see the Durbar through the eyes of George V ("rather tired after wearing the Crown for 3½ hours"); we can see Munich through the eyes of Neville Chamberlain: "For

the most part H. spoke quietly and in low tones . . . I got the impression that here was a man who could be relied upon."

The starting-point of *They Saw It Happen* is acceptable, but the ending seems arbitrary: why stop at the threshold of the last war? Why not end in 1945 or with the Coronation eight years later? Why not give us Alamein in the words of Montgomery, and VE Day in the words of Churchill? It seems a pity to have wasted the mine of post-war memoirs, and to have left this book so clearly dated. This, indeed, is the chief criticism of Professor Briggs's anthology. The choice of quotation can only be a matter of opinion (though I should have liked the Duke of Windsor's account of the Abdication); but there is no doubt that the book ends thirteen years too soon, and deprives us of history far more significant than some that is mentioned.

But perhaps Professor Briggs will cover those thirteen years in a further anthology; and perhaps the criticism is itself a compliment. For it is, after all, a compliment, at the end of 500 pages, to want to go on reading.

## NEW FICTION

**Nothing Important Ever Dies.** Romain Gary. Cresset Press, 15/-

**The Lincoln Lords.** Cameron Hawley. Michael Joseph, 21/-

**The Fiercest Heart.** Stuart Cloete. Collins, 18/-

Novel reviewing has recently been under fire—from Richard Hoggart in a radio talk, and from Robert Shaw in a *Sunday Times* novel review. These critics are right; reviewing is, as it long has been, in a poor state, and the divergence of opinion among reviewers about particular books is as disturbing as their fondness for hailing every third novel as "the best I've read this year." Last year was not a good year for good books, but the facts that its best-sellers were two highly sentimentalized books about living with animals (I still, against all the odds, prefer people, and think them the only fit subject for literature) and that nostalgia and poeticized sentimentality were the order of the day must make the reviewer wonder why people don't buy the books he praises. The public is of course silly; it buys books for extraneous reasons and not for literary merit, but it is still the reviewer's duty to apply the literary standard.

The literary critic's biggest difficulty is that everyone can read, and all think they can read as well as he (hence the sneers about literary experts at the *Lady Chatterley* trial).

## BEHIND THE SCENES



11—DAME NINETTE DE VALOIS, D.B.E.

Director of the Royal Ballet, and Britain's most honoured danseuse and choreographer.

However, there are standards, which can be acquired only with difficulty and care. The reviewer's second difficulty is, of course, that most books are written with great competence nowadays—they are mediocre only in matters of grandeur of attempt, of intellect, of human understanding. Only one of the books in this week's bag strains for art; the other two are tales, which, in the end, is what most workaday novels are. They make believable characters, tell a story, and leave behind the sense of being not instructed, not enriched, not enlarged but entertained.

*Nothing Important Ever Dies* is, I understand, a revision of Romain Gary's *Forest of Anger*. It is the story—or rather a succession of stories—about a boy fighting with Polish partisans against the Germans during the last war. Each of the stories has a poetic quality, an intensity and width of meaning, that reminds one of Crane's *Red Badge of Courage*; it shares with that book also a deeply felt optimism, the optimism of the title. Yet its belief that liberty, honour and justice are human eternal, a belief that alone could justify the partisans Mr. Gary describes, is seen by the author himself as a faith, a fairy tale one must believe in; and this makes the book itself seem yet another fairy tale holding up a promise that one isn't sure is going to be kept.

*The Lincoln Lords* comes from the pen of Cameron Hawley, who is clearly setting out to be the J. P. Marquand of the American business world. It was William Dean Howells who pointed out the importance to America of the

business novel—after all, business was what America was about—and he led the way with *The Rise of Silas Lapham*. The problem with the business novel is that the novel is concerned with moral problems, and business all too often is not. My point is illustrated by our hero Mr. Lord himself; he is the front-man, the public-relations expert, the hand-shaker who solves all problems by his charm and his skill at getting people together. Scientists, writers, academics quail before him because he can put what they have to say over, and sell it to the world. Mr. Hawley tries to show him as a good and necessary man in the modern American society. Perhaps he is, but he is still a parasite; my scale of values and Mr. Hawley's cannot meet, even though I think he tells stories well.

So does Stuart Cloete. *The Fiercest Heart* is likewise a big book, likewise carefully—almost mathematically—plotted. A story about the great Boer trek of the 1830s, with adventure and a well-drawn presentation of a fascinating and vanished society, that of the puritan, adventure-loving, government-hating Afrikaaners, it is what my wife calls "a rattling good yarn."

—MALCOLM BRADBURY

#### MASTER OF THE GROTESQUE

**Arthur Rackham: His Life and Work.** Derek Hudson. Heinemann, 84/-

It surprises me to learn that Arthur Rackham died twenty-one years ago, for his quality of line and the mysterious atmosphere surrounding it remain clear in the mind's eye. Perhaps this is because most of us took our Rackham in childhood, when impressions are sharpest.

For over half a century he delighted us with his pleasantly grotesque illustrations of such classics as *Rip Van Winkle*, *Grimm's Fairy Tales* (he illustrated over one hundred!), *Peter Pan* (perfect team-work here), *Midsummer Night's Dream* and a great many more. He seems to have thoroughly enjoyed all his work, except Poe's *Tales of Mystery and Imagination*, the nature of which resulted in drawings that he confessed frightened him.

He was a modest individual (his *Who's Who* entry: Rackham, Arthur R. W. S.), in appearance more like the clerk he first set out to be than a great popular artist. In a worldly sense he was certainly a success, at his peak in 1920 earning £7,000 a year. He liked plenty of time to illustrate a book (two years delivery was not uncommon) and it was this thorough approach that forced him to decline the original illustration of *The Wind in the Willows*, so providing Ernest Shepard with the stepping-stone to fame. But Rackham got there in the end, literally, by starting an American edition in 1936 and completing the work in 1939 on his deathbed.

In 1907, many doubted the wisdom of his illustrating *Alice* in the wake of Tenniel. *Punch* was unkind about it at

the time and I personally consider it his one serious error of judgment, for his Alice is a colourless wallflower and his Red Queen a pale shade of Tenniel's.

The book is full of anecdote and evocative colour, and produced up to the high standard that Rackham always insisted upon in his lifetime.

—RUSSELL BROCKBANK

#### PATHETIC FALLACIES

**Socrates and the Animals.** Elena Quarelli. Trans. Kathleen Speight. Hodder & Stoughton, 12/6

Dottressa Quarelli is convinced, whatever the Christian view may be to the contrary, that animals have souls. In support of her theory she quotes widely from Plato (the *Phaedo*), Aristotle, the Bible, Thomas Aquinas (in whose arguments she detects a logical flaw), Fabre, Maeterlinck and a number of naturalists, besides drawing on her own personal experience. It seems to her beyond doubt that most if not all animals possess a limited faculty for "rational" thinking, that they are capable, on occasion, of experiencing affection, compassion and even mirth, and that they can sometimes understand human speech.

Yet even supposing that all this is true; what proof does it afford of Pussy's or Rover's immortality? The Dottressa's thesis assumes, in any case, a belief in human survival; and in discussing the behaviour of domesticated animals she ignores—amongst other things—the researches of Pavlov. Her arguments, in fact, tend to be highly selective, and she too easily falls a victim to the pathetic fallacy. A good birthday present, however, for most animal-lovers and all anti-vivisectionists.

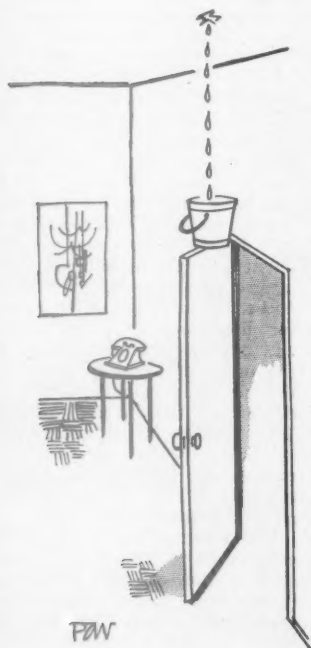
—JOCELYN BROOKE

#### NEXT TO NATURE, ART

**Toulouse-Lautrec: A Definitive Biography.** Henri Perrouchet, translated by Humphrey Hare. Perpetua Books, 35/-

**The Artist and His World.** Julian Trevelyan. Gollancz, 12/6

M. Perrouchet's book contains no reproductions of paintings; but the photographs of Lautrec in sundry amusing disguises, Mikado, moslem, senorita, etc., should do something to correct the cheap popular idea of him as a poor little lost soul, in spite of a gift for painting. Admittedly he died from excesses but this is far from being the whole story. Apart from his appalling deformity which debarred him from marriage or conventional love, Lautrec got an enormous amount of fun out of life, in addition to serving his art. He was a gourmet, a very good cook and a brilliant (if sometimes diabolic) host and guest; he adored sailing and swimming, and became keenly interested, as a spectator, in bicycling when it first came into fashion. He also occupied a privileged position in several houses of prostitution as a substitute for the happiness which he could never have. There is much information in this book concerning Lautrec, his





fantastic father (also fond of travesty), Van Gogh, and the cabaret performers Bruant, La Goulue and Yvette Guilbert. But as a life it is still not free from sensationalism and sentimentality. Lautrec drank! (author's exclamation mark). We are told that he was immune (through bitterness) to human feeling, yet loved the prostitutes he painted. This does not seem to add up.

Mr. Trevelyan is a distinguished artist as well as being a gifted teacher—a somewhat unusual combination. He writes on the whole rather depressingly about the problems and conditions, moral and physical, prevailing for the young artist and art student to-day. He may well be right so far. He even doubts the use of art schools at all in his blackest moments. In this he has the redoubtable Matisse on his side: "They only teach what not to do." Here I venture to oppose them both. Young people need to thrash out their problems together: the art school provides the opportunity to do so. They also need guidance, more than ever now when all standards have gone cock-eyed: the art school can provide that too. Mr. Trevelyan's theme is "Don't be an artist unless you have something to say," to which I would add "And a gift for saying it." That no art school can give. The gloom is relieved by some nice humorous passages; I particularly liked the imaginary sketching party.

—ADRIAN DAINTRY

## CONSCIOUS OF CULTURE

**Memoires Intérieurs.** François Mauriac. Translated by Gerard Hopkins. *Eyre and Spottiswoode*, 21/-

How continuously conscious of French culture French authors are. In Gide's *Journals* the endless readjustment of the writer as he re-reads his forerunners is one of the main threads and here, in these reflections and reminiscences and notes, we see Monsieur Mauriac living and growing through the same process.

Whether he is talking about religion or politics or the art of fiction, Monsieur Mauriac remains alert and unpredictable. His essays show the same supreme ability to engage the reader as his novels. The teasing relationship with Gide, the deep respect for Proust, the worship of Pascal, the memories of half-forgotten experimental writers of the past are mingled in these lively and profound pages with evocations of the landscape of south-west France and rather disparaging remarks about Paris. The great recent controversy over the destiny of France is not directly illuminated; but nearly everything Monsieur Mauriac says about Valéry or Baudelaire or Racine shows his position in it was inevitable.

—R. G. G. PRICE

## BEHIND THE RISORGIMENTO

**Garibaldi. The Legend and the Man.** Peter de Polnay. *Hollis & Carter*, 25/-

Among the many fascinating pieces of information that Mr. de Polnay supplies

in his light-hearted book is the fact that the famous red shirts were originally bought cheap by Garibaldi for his Legion in Montevideo. They were designed to be exported for meat salters in Buenos Aires; a blockade made the manufacturer glad to sell and the impoverished hero glad to buy. Mr. de Polnay does not perhaps fill in the background of South America and Italy as much as his knowledge of both would entitle him to do, but he gives fair portraits of the hero/villains of the Risorgimento. Garibaldi himself he considers to have been a lucky rather than a great military leader, and he points out that when in an historic phrase Garibaldi offered his volunteers hunger, thirst, cold, heat, no pay and no rations—that was what they got. In spite of adulation Garibaldi remained curiously unspoiled, and when he retired to Caprera he lived a simple life with his daughter's nursery maid. She was the mother of his last three children and finally he married her. The witty Pope Pio Nono truthfully remarked that the only two people who made nothing out of the Risorgimento were himself and Garibaldi.

—VIOLET POWELL

## UNCONVENTIONAL LEADERS

**A Pride of Unicorns.** John Pudney. *Oldbourne Press*, 21/-

The Atcherley twins were legendary figures in the R.A.F. Fearlessness was the prime quality of them both and they were completely dedicated to the Service. Appointed to take over Flying Training Command late in 1956, Sir Richard Atcherley still had unbounded enthusiasm for the Service which had been his whole life. It was fitting that he should be asked to take the Cranwell salute in 1958, an honour previously reserved for Royalty or politicians of at least Cabinet rank. The twins were never conventional and there is a vast store of amusing incidents in their lives which John Pudney has drawn upon to produce a most readable biography.

—A. V.



"I say a woman's place is in the cave."

## CREDIT BALANCE

**The Lower View.** Philip O'Connor. *Faber*, 16/- Baffling sequel to the celebrated *Memoirs of a Public Baby*. Reminiscences of low life mixed with reflections on art and class and accounts of interviewing Sir Herbert Read, Mr. Spender and others. Vaguely menacing tone periodically gives way to gusts of charity and humour. There are some brilliant flashes of description and some good ideas amid the torrent of words.

**The Morning After.** Alistair Sampson. *Dennis Dobson*, 6/- There is a jolly, fresh air of carefree lunacy about this collection of scraps of light verse and lighter prose, illustrated by some of the author's ink scribbles of such extreme lightness it's a wonder they don't blow away. As admirers of his performances on "Tonight" will expect, this tiny volume is loaded with originality and wit.

**The French Revolution.** Georges Pernoud and Sabine Flaissier. Translated by Richard Graves. *Secker and Warburg*, 25/- Anthology of extracts from eye-witnesses, published and unpublished. Dramatic, readable. Effect a bit in the manner of *Tale of Two Cities* or *Scarlet Pimpernel* but perhaps personal narratives are bound to concentrate on the momentary, the chaotic and the destructive. A valuable reminder that history has its victims as well as its trends.



## A REGULAR ORDER

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BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE

## FOR WOMEN

*My Next Husband—V.*

I AM married to a Civil Servant. My next husband can be a Civil Servant too—most honest Englishmen are these days—as long as he acts a bit more like one. I mean, it's nice having round the house a qualified boots-and-helmet diver who can do sums on a slide-rule, but what a woman needs is a man who'll sit in the same room in the same office all day so that she can telephone him for a cauliflower, a man who'll be home with that cauliflower at six sharp to seize the bicycle lamp and unfurl his Civil Service umbrella and trudge back into the cold night for the logs and the wet washing. Yes, my next husband is going to have an elusive but unmistakable quality that I can only describe as henpecked. I am going to run *him*.

Herbert, for so I think of this wistfully puny figure (twenty-four inches round the shirt, for easy ironing), isn't going to be any trouble to cook for, even though he'll want dinner every single night at seven instead of some nights at midnight and some not at all, because he's going to adore good solid British cooking, the sort you leave steaming in basins or stewing in ovens. Hotpot, steak-and-kidney pud, macaroni cheese, those ought to do him. He'll rub his hands ecstatically over any food I put on the table anyway, even Crunchitex at breakfast. Imagine a husband who eats breakfast cereals!

He won't be practical, though. Other women may dream of a practical second husband, but what I dream of is Herbert's amazed admiration as he inspects the fence I've knocked back to the vertical with six nails, a hinge and a batten. "Gosh, dear, how did you manage it! It's as good as new!" (No giving the fence a sceptical kick that sends it over again; no dispassionate

explanation involving strain, stress and rotten wood; just that quiet background encouragement that does so much for a woman's morale.)

Not practical in big things, I should have said. Herbert is going to be crazy about those gadgety mending jobs with bits of wire and weeny screws. He's going to take the midget screwdriver from me, saying laughingly "No, dear, this is not a woman's job!" (He seems to be the sort of man who calls his wife dear; I'll have to do something about that.) Another mending job he'll be crazy about is my sewing-machine, which *he* won't shrug off as a bit of feminine flummery. I may even get him on to some simple hemming. Men do sit about so on winter evenings, and I personally think one TV Western so like another.

In the summer evenings, of course, Herbert will garden, his *forte* being the individual staking of small kinky-stalked plants. I haven't decided if he shall be midge-proof or just too frightened of me to pour my best eau-de-cologne over his hair in the idiotic belief that it keeps the brutes away; either will do me fine, really, as long as he takes his wellingtons

off outside the back door and when he gets up on Saturday morning doesn't steam round the house shouting for mythical green ribbed socks to wear with them. But of course Herbert will never shout. Yes, he will though—when he's at the bottom of the garden. "Coffee, you said, dear? Thank you, dear! Coming!" None of those mean silences broken by "I HEARD YOU THE FIRST TIME!"

Herbert's firmly developed sense of wonder will often cause him to drop his own breakfast newspaper (*The Times*) to gasp "Goodness me, fancy that!" when I read him exciting bits from mine. Combined with his acute observation it will ensure that he never gets through the front door of an evening without marvelling "Your cardigan has got different buttons!" and "How well you've polished that little table-to-day!" Something of the freshness of childhood will cling to him too, in the way he revels in the English seaside, and crumpets buttered both sides, and Hamleys at Christmas time. Talking of that, he isn't just not going to mind carrying parcels, he isn't going to raise a squeak at the unwrapped sort, the folded overcoat crowned with pressure cooker and bunch of flowers that modern life so often forces on parked motorists.

I grow misty thinking of Herbert's little likes—British sherry, getting up at ten on Sunday morning, duty telephoning, being clawed by the cat—but I do realize a man isn't born with these endearing foibles and it won't be till I've pinched his coathanger space and made him read a knitting pattern aloud that he realizes it's a woman's world and caves in. Dear Herbert . . . just thinking of him makes me positively agog to rush into the cold night for those logs.

—ANGELA MILNE

*Food for Thought*

IT was my fault. All that begging by the high chair—"Please, please eat the nice dinner it's taken mummy hours to make"—I overdid it. And by the time I was telling the third "Starve for all I care," it was too late. He had seen what *fun* it all was.

Team work distinguishes my sons from the run-of-the-mill faddy feeders. Anything one can do, three can do

better. The basic idea—in the early days anyway—was never to try anything new. Mother's milk was O.K. So was that off-white pap on which infants are weaned, which remained until well into his teens my eldest boy's idea of a cracking good snack. But anything not home-cooked; not monotonously, drearily familiar, got the thumbs-down at sight. Long after other people's children were

taking herbs and pepper, even cooking sherry in their stride, going for half-term treats to Chinese restaurants; mine, when torn from their own table, ate cheese sandwiches in the car.

I suspect it was the middle boy (the one who looks like Tony Hancock) who eventually found team discipline hard to take; who simply couldn't eat *enough* semolina. So they started the permutation scheme. Which is roughly that no boy shall eat what the other two eat, or at least not at the same time. Its success rests mainly with numbers one and three, although Tub contributes his heroic mite by spurning milk chocolate and marmalade. (He's the one who has honey for breakfast. The other two dishes contain the marmalade we like, and the only kind number three will eat.)

The eldest, a five-foot-ten Peter Pan, clings to his porridge and sausage high tea; implores us please not to make him share an adult evening meal. But it's the youngest who's the ace, the artist, the expert. He'll eat eggs but not the whites. He'll eat marmalade because of the peel, but not jam because of the pips. He likes cold chocolate; loathes hot cocoa. Adores tomato ketchup; detests tomato soup. And has kept all the old weapons as well, like not eating vegetables and throwing up at the sight of skin. School hasn't cured him either, since a gaunt little girl sits beside him at mealtimes the way the dogs do at home.

So I have one who likes tinned peaches, and two who don't. Two who eat butter; one who insists on margarine. One who likes hot ham; one who eats cold ham fat. Two who like frozen peas, with one falling out when they come for a change intermingled with carrots. One likes his bacon crisp and his toast burnt. One won't touch bacon at all. Two will eat spaghetti; one will eat macaroni; none will touch rice. Christmas is tricky because two don't like turkey, and the one who doesn't like mince pies isn't the one who does like Christmas pudding.

Over the years I've got quite good at it all. I can even remember who likes which breakfast cereal. And at least they all like milk. It's the only thing they do drink. Around the time their contemporaries are experimenting with their first martinis, my sons may be daringly tasting their first cup of tea.

— JOAN RICE

## Can I Help You?

I COULD produce, almost at the drop of a hat,  
This or that.  
For instance, if really put to it, I could do tea  
For 23,  
Lend my sheaf of lecture-notes on the poems of Keats,  
Or nylon sheets,  
And, if required, the use of my bosom to cry on,  
Or ski-pants to try on.

But, when I hear urgent footsteps on the path,  
It will be a bath,  
No. 8 needles, and a handful of rice that you need.  
Yes, indeed,  
For the boiler's gone out, I've lent Mary my 8s, and the mice  
Have been at the rice.

— MARGOT CROSSE



"... et l'année dernière nous étions—is that right?—en vacances à ..."



## Toby Competitions

### No. 149—Bargains for All

**W**HY should drapers have all the best sales? Draw up an advertisement for New Year Sales in less familiar fields of retailing, industrial or professional activity. Limit 100 words.

A framed Punch original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up receive a one-guinea book token. Entries by Wednesday, January 25. Address to TOBY COMPETITION No. 149, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

### Report on Competition No. 146

(Original Spirit)

Many entries for this competition, which called for a party game calculated to loosen up the non-mixers, took the word spirit too literally and simply tried

to get the introverts drunk. Others, realizing that non-mixers might also be non-drinkers, relied on variations of well-known themes. So originality was at a premium and it was not possible to award many prizes.

The winner is:

MISS L. A. SMITH  
B.F.E.S. ISERLOHN  
B.F.P.O. 24

Instruct everyone to spend the next quarter of an hour in making a potted biography of someone in the room. Players must question as many people as possible, other than the subject, for details, so that the victim remains in ignorance. They must, of course, be willing to answer questions about themselves. When finished the biographies must be given a title and read aloud, and

the identity of the victims is then guessed and prizes awarded accordingly.

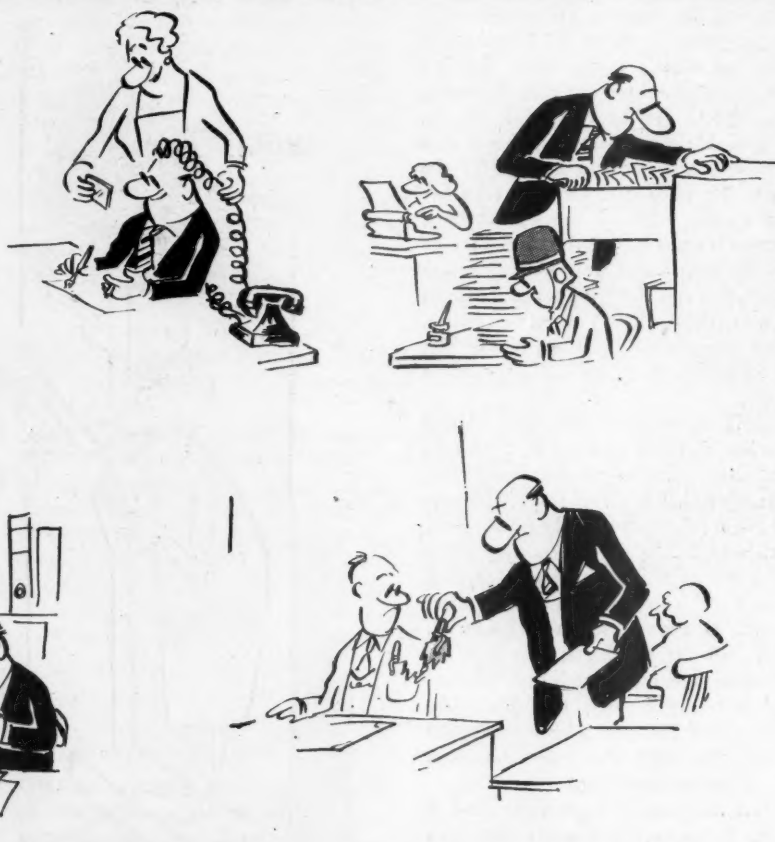
Of the remainder only one can be selected as a runner-up:

First put non-mixers at ease by placing them in natural environment—a silent tube-train. Seat them in two rooms (upstairs and downstairs), arranging chairs as in a compartment. Passengers sit or "strap-hang" with newspaper, in silence. At "All Change" passengers rush in silence to the other room and re-form. Passengers making any noise (including laughing or coughing) become ticket-inspectors and walk once through the "carriage" during each "journey," then run down or upstairs in the opposite direction to the "passengers," still silent. The last surviving "passenger" wins. Result: Tumultuous chatter by all after prolonged silence.

C. H. L. Davey, *The Lamp House*, Burrington, Bristol.

## Man in Office

by *Larry*



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